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Theme:

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE HINDU VIEWS CONCERNING MAN

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EDITORIAL

THIS issue of *Religion and Society* brings to our readers a number of papers which were presented at the Nagpur Colloquium on the Hindu and the Christian Views of Man, which was held in October 1960. In many ways it was an unusual gathering of Hindu scholars and Christian participants, numbering in all about twenty. Elsewhere we have given a list of the names of the people who were able to come. The programme for the Colloquium, which is printed along with that list, will give our readers an idea of the general ground which was traversed in the course of the informal conversation.

What were stressed throughout the Colloquium, however, were informality and free, personal exchange of thought. So that it was not the programme-processed discussion across the conference table that figured to be of most value as the agenda-unfettered give and take of friendly conversation which went on almost round the clock. To many of us it was a period primarily of rich personal fellowship, the like of which one experiences but rarely, founded on mutual respect for our different affirmations of faith and an earnest desire to understand the other point of view.

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It was agreed from the outset that we should not think in terms of "findings". What we aimed at was rather a clearing of the ground so that, as Hindus and Christians, we could in some way get to see the implications of each others presuppositions of faith in regard to our understanding of the nature and destiny of man. At the end there was a general feeling that the Colloquium was indeed a worth-while undertaking, not because it led to certain common conclusions but rather because it clarified for each his own convictions in the context of the convictions of men of other faiths. Because the participants in the Nagpur Colloquium reckoned that the experiment—for experiment it certainly was—could well be rated a success, it was unanimously agreed that the Colloquium should be made an annual feature of the programme of C.I.S.R.S. What is more, it was also agreed that in arranging for the next Colloquium the Director can count on the co-operation of Prof. M. Yamunacharya as joint-convener, so that this endeavour is in reality a joint undertaking, expressive of a common concern to cope with a contemporary situation that has challenging relevance to all men of faith.

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Much is being said and written today about the imperative need for "dialogue" between men of faith who are adherents of different religions. Only when one actually enters into such conversation one realizes what it actually involves. Primarily, of course, willingness to see each other's point of view. But this undoubtedly implies also the readiness to admit that there is, in fact, a point of view other than one's own. This acceptance seems more easy for one who has been brought up in a Hindu tradition than for the Christian. Many reasons can be found for this difference in attitude. The most important is that within Hinduism itself there are basic divergences which, to many from the outside, seem fundamental cleavages that do not merely appear to be due to difference in emphasis but of standpoints so contradictory as to be essentially irreconcilable. At the Nagpur Colloquium this stood out arrestingly. Here we were not reading about Hindu beliefs and practices; we were face to face with some of the most brilliant Hindu minds that were saturated in intimate acquaintance with the different traditional scriptures of the many schools of thought which they variously represented, original texts of which they could extensively quote with effortless ease. And, what is more, they were men to whom their faith vitally mattered. To us Christian participants in the Colloquium what was impressive was that differences within Hinduism were manifestly there, and that our Hindu friends saw no incongruity in admitting that not only these traditional differences were there but that they had been preserved these many centuries as various points of view.

Another significant fact was the stress laid on the reality of a basic difference between Hinduism and Christianity as systems of religious thought. At no time was there any attempt by our Hindu colleagues in the Colloquium to establish points of identity, though a community of interest was recognized. Similarities were taken for granted. That they were there did not minimise the tremendous gulf of difference which lay in between. This note of realism was repeatedly struck throughout the conversation without, however, creating any jarring discord. The darśana-temper of Hindu approach to Ultimate Reality can be surprisingly catholic and tolerant because it is obviously based on the assumption that not only differences are bound to be there, but also that such differences are to be accepted for what they are worth, as differences of approach from the human end.

The trend throughout the conversation, from the Hindu approach certainly, seemed to place increasing emphasis on a metaphysics of Ultimate Being rather than on a theology of relationship with God. From this approach to religious understanding—and Hinduism would seem most anxious today that this point of view be given adequate

recognition—all religion is "empirical", being concerned with man's strivings in the here and now to establish a relationship with a Power or with powers, willing and able to come to man's aid, whereby he can currently cope with the limitations of finite existence. Metaphysics, on the other hand, is concerned with the here and now, which is of the nature of the temporal, contingent and impermanent, only in as far as it could be translated in terms of the eternal, absolute and abiding Existence. To at least one Christian participant in the Nagpur Colloquium it was passing strange how often in the course of the conversation metaphysics in Hindu thinking threatened not only to supersede but finally displace religion. Not so frequently perhaps in the minds of those who did not subscribe to the rigorous conclusions of Sankarite Advaita. In fact, they periodically voiced protest. For all said and done, from the Hindu point of view, theology, as the Christian understands it, is a concern that belongs to the sphere of empirical existence, which is a strange complex of being and becoming, a mysterious mix-up of what is (*sat*) and what is not (*asat*). Consequently theological differences, which are regarded as synonymous with religious differences, are not only to be expected but to be granted as permissible and valid. For all religion, whether expressed in worship, conduct, or interpretation of beliefs, relates to reality only in as far as that is partially apprehended in terms of God or the gods of the human here and now. But that does not make all religion invalid. It only puts the same limitations on the validity of religion, as it does on the history of creaturely being or, as the Hindu would call it, of empirical existence.

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In the same way, it is striking, that the word most commonly used for empirical religion is *dharma*, where the emphasis is laid more on what man makes of it to scale the heights from empirical existence to trans-empirical being—"from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality". With lofty superiority a Christian may dismiss this understanding of religion as a means to an end rather than as end itself. But he must pause to consider whether many of his fellow-Christians do not regard religion the same way.

Every religion has its own cultus and its characteristic practices which are in fact regarded as means. And religious imagination places greater store by these overt practices whereby people of different faiths are distinguished rather than the underlying beliefs which provide the *rationale* for these practices. An interesting, but illuminating, illustration of this point may be incidentally referred to. On the first night of the Compline we had at Nagpur, the leader announced, "Let us

kneel down and confess our sins." One of the Hindu friends who had come for the Compline later expressed the desire to be excused from kneeling, but that he wanted very much to join us in the act of worship. Worship of God, he could join; but worship of God as the Christian understood Him—holy, sovereign, Lord (in their Biblical sense), which were what the act of kneeling symbolised—he felt was something with which he could not identify himself. This led to his interpreting, at least to one Christian member of the Colloquium, his understanding of *dharma* as both singular and plural at the same time, as religion and religions. Worship, for instance, was worship of the same God; but, at the same time such worship was of many different forms, based on the various human understanding of the nature of the God of worship. Notice that the objection is not to the Christian kneeling when he says his prayers, no more than to other acts of devotion associated with different kinds of cultus in religion. The objection is to making any one theology normative. That is why in the Hindu conception of religion as *dharma*, theology (understanding of the *nature* of God or gods) is secondary because it is subjective, individual and sectarian. To be sure, to the theistically inclined, and the Ramanujites in particular, all theology is not *aparavidyā*. Nevertheless to a Christian listener it left the impression that in the Hindu understanding of religion, metaphysics was extra-*dharma* and may even be contra-*dharma*, for it dealt with what was essentially *different* from, and other than, all that we now claim to know and experience. At the same time, it was affirmed that religion is indeed interbound with metaphysics, in that the ultimate goal of religious striving lay outside the realm of this-wordly experience. What however is of fundamental importance, in this view of religion as *dharma*, is present conduct in this realm of day-to-day living, and such ethical living may be regulated by the sanctions of religion so that it eventually led to self-fulfilment. So the importance given to the four stages of life and the bearing of *dharma* on the quest for economic security (*artha*) and emotional well-being (*kāma*).

* * * * * *

On the other hand, there was repeatedly expressed profound concern in the social changes in which people in India were involved and the responsibility which devolved on men of faith in our generation. The imperative for social service was fully recognized, but the question whether there was a metaphysical justification in Hindu thought for such involvement in contemporary schemes for social action was left unanswered. From one point of view, the game of life had to be played according to the rules of the game, and once the game was over the rules did not apply. Life was of the empirical sphere of exist-

ence. From another point of view, mystic self-realization (which according to some Hindu interpreters was a present possibility, not to be confused with mystic self-identity, which was strictly a trans-empiric reality), may indeed give the driving impetus and metaphysical justification for social action. In any case, the empiric reality of day-to-day encounter with social evil was sufficient provocation for corporate effort to combat all factors in modern life which militated against human welfare. It was in this spirit that Hindu social reformers were busying themselves in radical schemes for the uplift of the outcaste and the abolition of caste restrictions.

* * * * * *

It should be readily admitted that both the discussions and the papers were more concerned about the general background of beliefs in each religion than about the doctrine of man as such. Possibly this was because the doctrine is only explicated in the context of the whole system of religious thought of which it forms part. Possibly also it was felt that such background knowledge could not be assumed. The Christian participants generally were better informed about Hindu fundamentals than the Hindu friends were about Christian theology. This was due to the fact that the Christian members of the Colloquium were theologically equipped, and part of their training involved some years of study of Hinduism. But it was obvious that their study had not led them to closer acquaintance with the original Sanskrit texts of the scriptures from which the Hindu friends quoted with ready facility.

The papers presented by the Christian participants bear a very striking family resemblance. Twenty-five years ago this would probably not have been so. The present generation of Christian students of theology have had the privilege of sitting at the feet of Christian theologians of ecumenical reputation and some of them have been themselves associated with current theological discussions connected with the World Council of Churches. The unity—and often the repetitive sameness—in presentation had its advantage in that questions raised by Hindu friends in a way related to all the Christian papers. They centred round such Christian concepts as sin, grace, the act of God in the person and work of Christ, the Resurrection and the Christian view of community. One wondered whether the theological concepts of Christianity could have been better communicated if adequately corresponding Sanskrit terms had been employed. Perhaps one outcome that might well be expected as the conversation progresses is the realization of such a hope, so that Christianity in India might truly become indigenous.

The fundamental difference seemed to be in that while the Hindu approach to and understanding of man and society was with reference to a metaphysical framework, the Christian emphasis was on the theological context, of man-in-relation to God and of man-in-opposition with God. Even in the Hindu theistic expositions of man the basic assumption of the ultimate "oneness" of the Brahman-Atman in beatific communion loomed large, and pointed to the final mystic oneness of Ultimate Being and the Real in empirical man. The essentially individualistic nature of religion as the solitary pursuit of each for mystic self-realization seemed still characteristic of Hindu understanding of religion, and what was repeatedly urged was the need for spirituality in the sense of religious self-culture as a common effort of men of all faiths in an age of materialism and secularism.

The gracious ease with which the Hindu participants at the Colloquium fitted themselves into the social life of the group, sharing rooms, joining at table, freely mingling in all aspects of the fellowship, was undoubtedly a departure from traditional customs which would have shocked an earlier generation of Brahmans. Here was manifest indication that we are in a new age in Hindu India where many social barriers are let down, and it was for the Indian Christian to get out of the Mission-compound isolation in which he had been bred to re-establish kinship with his Hindu brethren.

MAN IN SAIVA SIDDHĀNTA

By Dr. V. A. Devasenapathi

What is the Śaiva Siddhāntin's view of man? The general answer will be that the Siddhāntin considers human birth—and in fact, all birth—as evil and that therefore his system advocates escape from the cycle of births and deaths. Chapter and verse may be quoted from the doctrinal and devotional works in support of this view. Yet those who go through the doctrinal and devotional works will find another view also—a view in praise of human birth and the opportunities it brings for worship of the Lord. One may venture the opinion that the Siddhāntin's sole concern is with the worship of the Lord and that he cares not even for release (*Mokṣa*), if only he can worship the Lord. *The end and aim of human existence is worship with no ulterior motive.*

Śaiva Siddhānta speaks of three verities, *Pati* (the Lord), *Paśu* (soul) and *Pāśa* (bonds). Tirumūlar says, "Of the three called *Pati*, *Paśu* and *Pāśa* are also beginningless". *Paśu* is the finite soul. The Siddhānta texts (Siddhiyār, *sutras* 3 and 4 for example) give arguments for the existence of the finite soul and for a plurality of such souls. The Siddhāntin is definite that the finite soul is an entity, different from *Pati* and *Pāśa*.

How the soul which is essentially intelligent like the Lord came to be associated with impurity is a question to which no answer can be given. All that can be said is that the soul has been beginninglessly associated with impurity even as verdigris is with copper. Though the association with impurity is beginningless, it is not endless for, by the grace of the Lord, the soul will regain its essential purity. Meanwhile it has to go through countless births and deaths, in all grades of existence, human, superhuman and subhuman. There is no guarantee that once a soul has attained human birth, there will be no lapse into lower grades of birth in future. Tāyumānavar says: "I don't know what my future birth will be like, if this life is lost. I don't know what birth I shall have". There is an account given by Māṇikkavācagar of births in various forms that the human soul goes through:

> "Grass was I, shrub was I, worm, tree,
> Full many a kind of beast, bird, snake,
> Stone, man and demon. 'Midst thy hosts I served.
> The form of mighty Asuras, ascetics, gods I bore,

Within these immobile and mobile forms of life,
In every species born, weary I've grown, great Lord"

(Pope's Translation of Tiruvācagam)

[The narrative speaks next about a happy consummation:
"Truly seeing Thy golden feet this day, I've gained release."]

The Siddhānta speaks of four main classes of living beings: egg-born, sweat-born, sprout-born and placenta-born, the varieties running into eighty-four lakhs. To have escaped all other varieties and to be born as a human being is a feat comparable to crossing an ocean by swimming. And yet, even if a soul is to appear in human form, there is risk of death while in the womb, or soon after birth, or after a few years, or as a boy, or in fairly advanced age. So, association with a form necessarily brings in its wake destruction of that form. (The moral drawn is that one should strive to get salvation while the form lasts.) We have in the Tiruvācagam a more detailed picture of the difficulties prior to birth. But in Pope's translation some of the lines are not translated. Those interested may look up the Tamil original. Here are the lines translated by Pope:

"On earth girt by the watery seas, from elephant to ant,
Through many matrices I passed,
Obtained a human form within my mother's womb".

After birth in human form, the career of the soul is not one of smooth spiritual progress. Here is a description of the trials and temptations, physical, moral and spiritual.

.....

"Thus was I born into the sad sea of th' afflictive life.
Then during each year as it met me
I gained and hoarded gains. How varied was my life!
Morning's routine, hunger in noontide hour, and night
For sleep. In journeys oft I lived.
Jet black locks, and crimson lips, and radiant smiles were hers;
Into love's sea I plunged

.....

In the wide marts where foolish worldlings toil
I lived, still slave to fierce desires
I lived by sea of learning multiform;
I lived in sorrow men call wealth;
I lived 'mid ancient stings of poverty,
And thus in varied forms and fortunes spent my days
Then wondrous thought of the Divine, so-called, arose.
Soon as I knew that Being, free from hate, unique

Delusive powers in ever-changing millions
Began beguiling varied play.
Relations, neighbours, came around,
With fluent tongue they urged their 'atheism'.
Friends around—(such herds of cattle old !)—
Seized me, call'd, hurried to and fro,
The Brahman said, 'The way of penance is supreme'.
And others showed the law of trusting love !
Sectarian disputants complacently
Discordant tenets shouted loud and fought.
Then haughty vedānt* creed unreal came,
Whirled, dashed, and roared like furious hurricane
Lokāyathan, a glistening mighty snake,
Brought cruel poisoned heresies.
(Whilst these delusions, endless, girt me round,
Lest I should go astray, He laid His hand on me!)"

(Tiruvācagam, Pope's translation.)

We have some more details in the *Sivajñāna Siddhiyār* about human birth and opportunities for worship that it brings:

> "One must be very fortunate in escaping birth in lands where the scriptures are unknown, and avoiding false faiths, is born in castes which are devoted to worship (of the Lord). It is rare indeed to be born as a Śaivite with humility characteristic of that faith. Blessed are those who, unaffected by the delusions of life, worship the Lord who wears the crescent". (The Lord's wearing the crescent is a sign of his forgiveness and protective benevolence.)

And here is a declaration which is clear and unambiguous about the end and aim of human existence. The *Siddhiyār* says: "Is it not for the worship of the Lord, in thought, word and deed that human life has been ordained ? Even the celestials come to the earth to worship the Lord. Alas, the dumb ones who are born in human form realise nothing of all this !"

The same view is expressed by Māṇikkavācagar in these words:

> "Said sacred Māl and lower born Ayan as they gazed
> On Śivan's form, 'This day in vain we spend and cry
> 'Tis time we went to earth and there were born'. 'Tis earth,
> 'Tis earth alone where Sivan's grace is wont to save".

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* The word used in Tiruvācagam is Māyāvāda.

Hindu view in general is that heaven and hell are places where the effects of merit and demerit respectively are experienced, and that after experience there, souls have to be reborn in this world where they experience the results of both. Opportunities for working for salvation as well as worship are available only in this world.

Attention may be invited to the classification of souls into (i) *Vijñānakalas*, (ii) *Praḷayākalas*, and (iii) *Sakalas* according as they have respectively, one two or three impurities. Yet another classification is into (i) *Sāmsiddhas*, (ii) *Vainayikas*, and (iii) *Prākṛtas*. *Samsiddhas* are those who, on account of their penances in previous life are born with an instinct for God-realization. They require no instruction through books and the Lord Himself guides them on to the sacred path. The *Prākṛtas*, being without the requisite skill and intelligence, are not yet ripe for instruction. The *Vainayikas* are those who advance through stages of onset of Divine Grace and are therefore fit for instruction.

Souls are subject to five states: (i) waking, (ii) dream, (iii) sleep, (iv) *turīya* (the fourth) and (v) *turyātīta* (beyond the fourth). They are given a world in which to live, and body with its sensory and mental organs to experience pleasure, pain, etc., and by gradual stages become eligible for the onset of Grace. The world, body, etc., thus given by the Lord are to enable them to work out their *karma* and become ripe for the removal of impurity. This is the redemptive purpose for which they are associated with matter. If, however, they forget this spiritual purpose and misuse the world and their body for mere sensual satisfaction, they tighten the bonds in whose grip they are. Souls have a tendency to identify themselves with their environment. Hence they are called *sadasat*. But in identifying themselves with their material environment, they are untrue to their nature. Tāyumānavar's prayer is appropriate for all souls: "May I be in inseparable union with the Lord who is true wisdom, even as I am now in inseparable union with the primal impurity!"

Tirumūlar speaks of the human form thus:

> "The form of the human body is Śivalingam
> The form of the human body is Cidambaram
> The form of the human body is Sadāśivam
> The form of the human body is the Divine Dance".

In Tiruṃūlar's work, we have a strong affirmation that the body is necessary for spiritual progress and that it is a part of wisdom to tend the bond so as to tend the soul. In Tirumūlar's work as well as elsewhere, we have the view that the body is the temple of the Lord.

"Time was when I thought of the body so impure,
And then I beheld the Substance living there
As the Lord resides in my body.
I consider it necessary to tend my body".

We have also the view that the mind of those who ever think of the Lord is His temple. In one of his songs, Appar says that the Lord (represented by the linga) resides in the heart of those who worship Him. Appar, in one of his compositions called the Tiruvaṅgappadiham mentions the various parts of the human body from head to foot and bids each of them worship the Lord in its fashion. The significance of human birth is thus brought out in Tiruvâcagam :

"He made my head to bow; my mouth to laud His cinctured Foot He taught: gave me to join the assemblage of His glorious saints".

Sundarar sings: "The Lord has given me head, mouth and mind for service to Him". In fact, Appar says that all the days one spends without uttering the praise of the Lord may be reckoned as days when one was not born. The Siddhānta view of the significance of human birth is seen in another of his verses: "Making a skeleton and clothing it with flesh and nerves to give me a (human) form, He has established me in joy, after removing my past *karma*. He has made my heart fit for His residence and out of His love for me made me His bond slave. Alas, that I should, instead of ever remaining in His presence go after vain things, like one who goes after a crow in preference to a hare!" Days not spent in worship which is the right ideal for man are days wasted in the pursuit of false ideals.

If human birth is spoken of in terms of utter disparagement, it is because men forget the grand ideal of human existence—the worship of the Lord—and run after shadows. If, however, the ideal of worship of the Lord and His saints is kept in view, what can be more glorious than human birth ? Sundarar, according to the *Periyapurāṇam*, is said to have felt when he worshipped at Cidambaram that birth in this world which enabled him to worship the dance of the Lord was indeed sacred. The author of the *Periyapurāṇam* says that he salutes human birth which has enabled him to worship such beloved devotees of the Lord as Sundarar. Appar's verse that even human birth is to be welcomed if it can vouchsafe vision of the Lord, is well known. He calls upon human beings to regard human birth as valuable since it gives an opportunity to worship the Lord.

The following summary of one of Paṭṭinathār's songs shows how human birth is misused and how it ought to be used:

"The impure litter of lust, anger and falsehood which has been piling up since I was in my mother's womb—this litter I have swept aside by great effort. I have driven out the five sturdy bulls (the five senses which hold me in thrall to the world) with the pegs by which they were tied up in me. I have cleansed up the place with love, lit the lamp of grace, dispelled darkness, spread the mattress of truth and thus made my mind which was formerly a waste-land, thanks to its association with things lowly, a bedroom for you, and the lotus of my heart a flower-bed for you.....May you and your consort be pleased to grace it with your Presence!"*

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* I make no apologies for quoting in full a poem of C. H. Sorley, which despite the difference in the religious and cultural background expresses the same sentiment. My reason for doing so is my feeling that my imperfect paraphrase in English of Paṭṭinathār does not do justice to the original and so that I must give readers something as good in English.

"From morn to midnight, all day through,
I laugh and play as others do,
I sin and chatter, just the same
As others with a different name.

And all year long upon the stage
I dance and tumble and do rage
So vehemently, I scarcely see
The inner and eternal me.

I have a temple I do not
Visit, a heart I have forgot
A self that I have never met,
A sacred shrine—and yet, and yet.

This sanctuary of my soul
Unwitting I keep white and whole,
Unlatched and lit, if Thou should'st care
To enter or to tarry there.

With parted lips and outstretched hands
And listening ears Thy servant stands,
Call Thou early, call Thou late,
To Thy great service dedicate."

THE ADVAITA CONCEPTION OF MAN

By Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan

There are several schools of Vedānta. They may be classified broadly into two groups: the absolutistic and the theistic. Vedāntic absolutism, however, is very different from Western absolutism. The same is true of Vedāntic theism *vis-a-vis* Western theism. For Vedāntic absolutism, the only reality is the Spirit or Self, and the world of plurality is but an appearance thereof. For Vedāntic theism, the supreme Spirit is a personal God who is really related to the world as its ground or cause. And the Personal God may be conceived in a variety of ways. Vedāntic absolutism which is *Advaita* does admit a Personal God and the world created by Him from the empirical standpoint. The supreme truth, however, is that there is no creation, and no plurality.[1] So according to *Advaita*, it is relevant to talk of man and creation, and their relation to God only from the empirical point of view. And, from this point of view, *Advaita* even makes a distinction between general creation and creation of living conscious beings. Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara's teacher's teacher, formulates the distinction as follows: God, as *Prāṇa* (Life-Force), creates all things, and as *Puruṣa* (Spirit), projects the conscious beings which are related to Him as rays to the sun.[2]

There are several grades of conscious beings—as the phrase goes—from grass to Brahma (the first to be created). These may be grouped under three heads, sub-human, human, and super-human. The group into which a soul is born is determined by the soul's past *karma*. The soul is born as an animal if there is an excess of demerit, as a god if there is an excess of merit, and as a human being if there is a balance between merit and demerit. So far as instinctive behaviour is concerned, man is not different from the animal. A cow, for instance, approaches the man who goes towards it with fresh grass in his extended hands, and runs away from him who runs after it with a club held aloft. Exactly similar is the behaviour of men in parallel situations.[3]

Is not man, then, superior to the animal? Wherein lies his excellence? Explaining a text of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* which speaks about the evolution of man from matter, Śaṅkara observes as follows: 'When

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[1] *Māṇḍūkya-kārika*, ii. 32.

[2] *Ibid.*, i. 6.

[3] Śaṅkara, *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣhya: paśvādibhis ca viśesāt* (Adyāsa-bhāṣya).

all things without distinction are modifications of matter (*annarasa*) and lineal descendants of Brahman, why should man alone be singled out here? The reason is that he is the principal. Why is he the principal? Because he has the eligibility for action and knowledge.'[4] In this context Śaṅkara quotes also a passage from the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* which runs thus: 'The *Ātman* is expanded only in man. He, indeed, is most endowed with intelligence. He gives expression to what is known. He sees what is known. He knows what is to come. He knows the visible and the invisible worlds. He perceives the immortal through the mortal. Thus is he endowed. But with the other animals, eating and drinking alone constitute the sphere of their knowledge.'[5]

In a sense, man occupies a position which is even more advantageous than that of the gods. For the status of the gods only provides the soul with the enjoyment of merit acquired in previous human lives, even as the animal state is meant for paying for past demerit. It is as a human being that the soul acts and enjoys, enjoys and acts, and also has the competence to break through this vicious circle and gain the highest human goal which is release (*mokṣa*).

According to Vedānta, the soul is not created; only its empirical outfit consisting of body and mind is created. The body-mind complex and its cause, nescience (*avidyā*), constitute the soul's *saṁsāra* (transmigratory life). Nescience is the causal body (*kāraṇa-śarīra*) of the soul. The causal body is also known as the sheath of bliss (*ānandamaya-kôśa*). The subtle body is composed of three sheaths: the sheath of intellect (*vijñānamaya-kôśa*), the sheath of mind (*manomaya-kôsa*), and the sheath of breath (*prāṇamaya-kôśa*). The physical body is the sheath of food, *i.e.*, matter (*annamaya-kôśa*). What happens at death is only a change of the physical body. The *Bhagavad-gītā* compares this to the change of garment. Just as a person discards an old set of clothes and puts on a new set, even so the soul leaves a worn-out body and takes on a fresh one.[6] The subtle body, however, continues with incidental alterations, and also the causal body, till the onset of release.

Man's experience is distinguishable into three states: waking (*jāgrat*), dream (*svapna*), and deep sleep (*suṣupti*). In the state of waking, man experiences the external world of things. In dream, he creates an inner world of images and imagines that he is a denizen thereof. In sleep, the sense of plurality is lost and there is awareness without awareness of *anything*. Of the three states, waking is unique in the sense that it is only as located here that man can know that he is bound by *avidyā*

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[4] *Taittirīya-upaniṣad-bhāṣya, Mem. Edn.*, Vol. 6., p. 71.

[5] *Aitareya Āranyaka*, III. ii. 3.

[6] *Gītā*, ii. 22.

(nescience), strive for and eventually gain *môkṣa* (release). We saw above that the status of man is a privileged one. Similarly, the state of waking has a vantage-point. Genuine philosophical inquiry leading to illumination is made possible here. But the inquiry should not be restricted to the implications of the waking world alone; for waking is only a segment of experience. And, inquiry in order to be fruitful must take into account the total experience. It is thus that the inquiry into the three states becomes supremely important in Advaita Vedānta. The result of this inquiry is that the Self is of the nature of pure consciousness, unaffected by the accidents such as the body, the mind, and the world, which change and pass. In the language of the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* and the *Kārikā* of Gauḍapāda, the true Self is *caturtha turīya* (the fourth), the transcendent reality. It is the 'fourth' not in addition to or as different from its appearances in waking, dream and sleep. It is the basic reality of the appearances, both individual and collective.

It does not take much time to set forth the truth of *Advaita* or to understand it intellectually. But long discipline and education are necessary in the case of the average man before he can intuitively realize that truth.

Śaṅkara prescribes a four-fold qualification for the prospective student of Vedanta: discrimination of the eternal from the non-eternal, non-attachment to the enjoyment of fruit here in this world or in heaven, the possession in abundance of means like calmness and equanimity and a longing for liberation.

The highest human goal is liberation from the cycle of transmigration. It is true that all men do not consciously recognize it or strive for it. Instead, finite ends such as wealth and pleasure are pursued with the consequence that one's grief increases. Even these, if sought after within the bounds of the laws of virtue (*dharma*), will pave the way for the commencement of man's spiritual journey. The pilgrim's progress may, however, be effectively made possible only by the recognition of the truth that the infinite and unconditioned Reality is the sole end for man. So, the aspirant should learn to distinguish the Infinite from the Finite, the Self from the not-Self; and he should not crave for the pleasures that belong to this world and the next. This is by no means easy. But the required competence may be gained through ethical training.

The method *par excellence* that is prescribed in the Hindu *sāstras* for ethical discipline is *karma-yoga*. One ought to do one's duty without a desire for its reward. When the duties are performed with a dedicated spirit, the mind gets purified; evils such as selfish greed, narrowness of outlook, and passionate local attachments are removed. Devotion

to God, which is called *bhakti-yoga*, is also necessary. This finds an important place even in the training of the Advaitin. Through devotion the passions get sublimated, the attention is shifted from the plurality of finite ends to the supreme spiritual end which is liberation.

The direct means to liberation, according to Advaita, is *jñāna-yoga*, the path of knowledge. Since the darkness of ignorance (*ajñāna*) is the root-cause of man's malady, it is the light of knowledge (*jñāna*) that has the power to remove it. The path of knowledge consists of three stages: listening to or study of the sacred texts (*śravaṇa*), reflection on what one has listened to or studied, with the help of the canons of reasoning (*manana*), and continued meditation on the supreme truth of which one is convinced (*nididhyāsana*). The end that is gained through this process is Self-realization which releases the individual from the bondage of ignorance. The Self that is realized thus is not the particular individual self but the absolute non-dual Spirit, which in theistic terminology is called God.

Self-realization and release from bondage can be achieved by man, according to Advaita Vedanta, even in this life. In fact, the goal is not something to be newly achieved; it is the eternally realized end. Only, man in the state of bondage is oblivious of this eternal truth. What is called realization or release is the recognition of this truth.

Man's pursuit of *môkṣa* can in no sense be called a selfish striving. Release, according to Advaita Vedanta, is release from individuality and egoistic narrowness. It is only the perfect man that can in the true sense be the benefactor of the world. There is no room for selfishness either in the Vedantic training or in the Vedantic conception of the goal. As a trainee the student of Vedanta has to obey the Golden Rule. As a man of Self-realization, one cannot be attached to the limited ego. His very presence is a great blessing to the world.

MAN IN THE BIBLE

By Principal J. R. Chandran

What is man? This is a fundamental question not only for Religion and Philosophy, but also for the Social Sciences. One cannot discuss questions of law, politics, democracy, human rights, marriage and divorce, racial tensions, economic planning, population control and similar issues without raising the more basic question: What is man? Is he just an animal like other animals or does he have a higher meaning and destiny? There is no simple universally understood rational answer to the question. Man is an enigma to himself and as Dr. Radhakrishnan has said, "It is an illusion to think that the human individual can understand himself as he really is." We need the resources of religious faith for understanding the true nature of man and for the evaluation of the social institutions which condition his life. The purpose of this paper is to indicate the insights about man derived from the sacred scriptures of the Christians, namely, the Bible.

The Bible interpretation of Man is to be found in the myths of Creation and Fall, in the reflexion on historical events in the life of the Hebrew people, and in the testimony of the early Church to the life and work of Jesus Christ.

The myths of Creation and Fall are contained in the *Book of Genesis* chs. 1–6. These myths try to express some of the deepest truths which underlie the Biblical understanding of man. They bring out the paradoxical character of man. According to these myths he belongs to both earth and heaven and this constitutes the enigma that he is.

1. Creaturely Finiteness

First there is the account of the creation of man, affirming that man is a creature among other created beings. He is not a self-existent being. God alone is self-existent. Man is a dependent being, deriving his existence from God. One aspect of man's creatureliness and his dependent existence is his finiteness and frailty. This is assumed throughout the Bible. This, however, is not evil. The Biblical affirmation is that the created world was good including man. Referring to this Reinhold Neibuhr says, "The Biblical view is that finiteness, dependence and the insufficiency of man's mortal life are facts which belong to God's creation and must be accepted with reference and

humility." There are many passages in the Bible which explicitly speak of man's weakness and frailty. Like other creatures in the universe man was created out of the matter which God had brought into being. The Genesis myths say that both man and beasts were created out of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7 and 9). The *Book of Job* also speaks of man's dependence on God. "Thy hands fashioned and made me.....Remember that thou hast made me of clay .....Thou dist clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews. Thou hast granted me life and steadfast love; And thy care has preserved my spirit" (Job 10: 8–12, *cp.* Ps. 139: 13–16). Another aspect of man's solidarity with the created order is his mortality. "You are dust and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3: 19 *cp.* Ps. 103: 14, Eccl. 12:17). Abraham confesses that he is but dust and ashes (Gen. 18:27). The Psalmist speaks of the shortness of life. "The years of our life are three score and ten, or even by reason of strength four score; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone and we fly away" (Ps. 90:10). Similarly in Isaiah we read, "All flesh is grass and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the Word of our God will stand for ever" (Is. 40: 6–8). Man's collective life also is involved in the same finiteness; "Behold the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as the dust on the scales....All the nations are as nothing before him, they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness." (Is. 40: 15–17). Jesus also assumed man's finiteness and his dependence on God. "Which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life" (Matt. 6: 27). In one of his parables, the unwise landlord is told, "Fool! this night your soul is required of you and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" (Luke 12:20).

2. The Image of God

Secondly, side by side with the recognition of man's frailty and mortal nature the Bible affirms the greatness of his dignity. Man is more than just a creature among other creatures. He holds a special position. We read in the Psalms, "When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers....What is man that thou art mindful of him.... Yet thou hast made him little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honour." (Ps. 8:4, 5). In the New Testament the life and teaching of Jesus Himself presupposed the infinite worth of man. "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life?" (Matt. 16:26). The infinite possibilities of man are affirmed in his words, "You must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). (See also

1 Cor. 11 : 2 and James 3 : 9). This Biblical faith about man is expressed in symbolic or mythical language in the words, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him" (Gen. 1 : 2). Though the expression *imago dei* occurs only a few times in the Old and the New Testaments, it is a key to the Biblical understanding of the relationship between God and man. This emphasis is particularly significant in view of the religious conviction of the Hebrews about the transcendence of God over nature and man. David Cairns (*Image of God in Man :* p. 19) has rightly remarked that the Bible never so exalts God as to turn man into a mere thing or to annihilate him. While emphasising the distance between God and man, the Bible is equally emphatic about the distance between man and nature and understands man to be a spiritual being related and responsible to God. To quote the words of Eichrodt, "The gift to man of the *imago dei* implies nothing less than a connection with God through which man, even as a sinner, remains a rational being capable of spiritual fellowship with God. His pre-eminence over all other creatures consists in the fact that as a conscious self he can be reached by God's Word, and thereby called to responsibility" (*Theology of the Old Testament*, II, pp. 60 ff).

The concept of the *imago dei* is certainly not a simple one. There is no rational explanation of it in the Bible itself. Therefore, it has led to a variety of interpretations. But explanations in terms of simple affinity between God and man or of the divine spark in man do not do justice to the Biblical view of man. For Emil Brunner the *imago dei* is to be primarily understood in terms of self-knowledge and self-determination on the basis of being known and determined by God. "God created man's being in such a way that man knows that he is determined and conditioned by God, and in this fact is truly human" (*Man in Revolt*, p. 97). According to him the sub-human creatures are in a finished state, they are what they ought to be. But man remains in the hands of God. He is addressed by God and is answerable to God. Man is an "answering" and "responsible" being. The *imago dei* in man is the creaturely counterpart of God's divine self-existence. Karl Barth suggests that the *imago dei* implies the societary nature of a personal being. He points out that in Genesis the creation of man in the image of God is closely related to the creation of man as male and female. This implies that man is man only in responsible social living and not as an isolated individual. Besides these the *imago dei* also includes the idea of man's freedom and dominion over nature. According to the Genesis myths man is to have dominion over the whole of creation. Everything is given to man to be subdued and used by him, subject only to God's commands. Man's achievements in

science and his increasing control over the forces of nature support the Biblical insight. Though dependent on God, man is gifted with creativity. He has the freedom to create and to destroy patterns of truth, beauty and goodness. To say, therefore, that man is created in the image of God means that God has given to man a certain dimension of selfhood, one characteristic of which is being able to stand in an I–Thou relationship with God.

It is also important to note that in the New Testament Christ is described as the image of God (2 Cor. 4: 4; Col. 1. 15). It is by our knowledge of Christ and his relationship to God as Son of God that we understand the meaning of the image. It is God's purpose that man should have ultimately the image of God that is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ.

3. Sinfulness

Thirdly, another aspect of the understanding of the *imago dei* in man is the affirmation that man is a sinner. *The Book of Genesis* contains the myths of the Fall. There is first the story of Adam and Eve driven away from the garden of Eden because of their disobedience of God's commands (Gen. 3). Then there is the story of Cain killing his brother Abel and the consequent sense of guilt. There is further the story of the Nephilim, born as a result of the inter-marriage between the sons of God and the daughters of men. These myths do not merely explain the origin of sin and evil. They rather give a penetrating diagnosis of the predicament of man as he finds himself on this planet. They express several aspects of the human situation.

1. Man is unable to acknowledge his dependence on God. Holding together the creaturely finiteness and the image of God is the basis of the temptation to reject the sovereignty of God. The root of man's wickedness is the mixture in him of the divine and the earthly.

2. The fundamental characteristic of sin is not the breaking of moral laws, but the rejection of God. Moral weakness is only an external symptom of an inner spiritual distortion.

3. The Fall myths also state the psychological aspects of sin, namely, the outward temptation, the mind dwelling on it and delighting in it, the inward response and then the actual act of sin.

4. According to the first myth of the Fall (Gen. 3) sin is associated with participation in the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Dr. Radhakrishnan has an interesting comment on this (*Recovery of Faith*, pp. 92–93). "Intellectual knowledge is a leap forward in man's awareness but is said to be a fall since it produces a fissure or a cleavage in man's life, a break in the natural order.... The dawn of

intellectual consciousness marks the end of his elemental state of wholeness and innocence."

5. Another aspect of the sinful state is seen in both Adam and Eve trying to throw the blame on others. Self-justification is one of the innate characteristics of the fallen man.

6. The myths also express the sense of shame and guilt associated with sin.

7. It is further shown that the most tragic element in man's sinful state is his alienation from God, the ground of his being and existence, and from one another. Adam and Eve hid themselves from God. Cain kills his brother Abel and then says, "Am I my brother's keeper." There is a recognition in these myths that this twofold alienation involves a further alienation of man from himself. It represents an inner contradiction. There is a recognition of a certain helplessness in the sinful state as well as one's responsibility and answerableness before God for his actions. This is the basis of the sense of guilt, which has set in motion a chain reaction involving the whole human race. This is symbolically expressed in the words of Cain, "My punishment is greater than I can bear....Whoever finds me will slay me" (Gen. 4: 13, 14) and those of Lamech, "I have slain a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain is avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy-sevenfold" (Gen. 4: 23, 24).

Though there is no systematic development of a doctrine of sin in the Bible it is generally assumed that sin is something inherent from birth and is universal. No man is sinless before God (I Kings 8:46; II Chr. 6: 36). The Psalmist says that no man living is righteous before God (Ps. 143:2). "They have all gone astray, they are all alike corrupt; there is none that does good, no, not one" (Ps. 14:3; Ps. 53: 3). Another Psalm says, "I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 51:5). We find the same insight in other books of the Old Testament. "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Prov. 20:9). "How then can man be righteous before God? How can he who is born of woman be clean?" (Job 25:4). An innate bias to evil is assumed. In later Rabbinic thought this came to be known as *Yezer hara*, an evil impulse. The Rabbinic attempt to trace the *Yezer hara* to the fall of Adam has no support from the Bible. In the New Testament too the universal sinfulness of man is assumed. Jesus calls the men of his generation adulterous and sinful (Mark 8:38; Luke 9:41). In his teaching everyone needed repentance and moral and spiritual renewal. "Everyone must be born again." (Luke 13: 15, John 3:3). Paul emphatically affirms the universality of sin. "All

have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3: 23). Man's sinful state is such that he cannot save himself by the determination of his will alone. In his epistle to the Romans we have an analysis of the nature of man's involvement in sin. "Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me....I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate....." (Rom. 7: 13–20). Now, some have held the view that it is sin to call man a sinner, on the ground that it undermines human dignity and worth. But actually by calling man a sinner, the Bible gives the highest place to man in creation. It is because man is considered to possess the image of God, it is possible to call him a sinner. A dog or a monkey is not called a sinner because it is what it is meant to be. But man is created with a higher calling, to be perfect as God Himself is perfect.

4. The Body-Soul Unity

The Biblical insight about man's dignity as well as his involvement in sin has its roots in the characteristic Hebrew view of human nature which assumes a two-fold solidarity of man. Human nature can be understood only in terms of his involvement in physical life and his social relationships.

The Bible does not recognise any sharp division between body and soul. The Greek idea that the body is mortal and the soul immortal is not the Biblical view on the whole. Even though the use of words flesh, body, soul, spirit and other related words are not absolutely consistent they provide no support for a body-soul dualism. As W. D. Stacey has pointed out (*Pauline View of Man.*, p. 88) the fundamental inclusiveness of body and soul is the key to Hebrew psychology. The idea of transmigration of souls is totally foreign to Biblical thought. Man's ultimate hope is in Resurrection which is an act of God, rather than in any kind of natural immortality of a soul independent of the physical body. In this Biblical emphasis we may see some aspects of both the *advaita* conception of Reality and the Buddhist conception of *anatta*. For the Bible, God alone has ultimate reality. Man's soul is not an independent entity. Man lives and is raised again to life only by the grace of God.

It is also important to note that the words in the Bible translated *soul*, namely, *nephesh* in Hebrew and *psyche* in Greek do not mean an entity that can exist and transmigrate independent of the body. They bear various shades of meaning such as breath, life, living being and self. In some contexts the right translation would be "*person*". They certainly do not imply an immortal soul as distinct from a mortal

body. This truth is further confirmed by the use of words meaning normally heart, mind and conscience in the sense of soul or self. The human self or person is thus conceived as inextricably involved in the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual life. All these aspects of human life together constitute the human self or person.

Similarly, the Bible believes that man achieves his selfhood or personality only in his involvement in social life. The fulness of humanity cannot be realised as detached individuals. This idea is brought out in the tension between the claims of the community and the individual. In the earlier Hebrew writings the individual is completely subordinated to the collective well-being of the community or the nation (Joshua 7 and Num. 16). They recognise a certain solidarity of the family and the effects of goodness or evil continue in the family for several generations. But we also find a certain reaction against such collectivist understanding of man in some of the later writings. Ezekiel, for example, holds an extreme individualistic view. He called upon the people not to say any more, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge", and taught that each soul is separately responsible before God. "The soul that sins shall die" (Ezekiel 18, *cp.* Jer. 31 : 29, 30). But even Ezekiel was deeply concerned about the well-being of the whole people. The tendency then is to hold together the claims of the individual and the community. In the New Testament also there is the same tension between the individual and the group. It is then neither individualistic nor collectivistic. It is both.. The individual finds his fulfilment in his free acceptance of the community. The community finds its fulfilment in the safeguarding of the worth of each individual.

Because of this conception of the unity of the human person, the concern for man's total being, including his physical needs as well as his intellecutal and spiritual needs, is at the very heart of the Bible. Social and political justice is not a matter of expediency in human affairs. It is a divine obligation of the people of God. Injustice and exploitation are marks of man's alienation and distortion of his nature. Though social justice cannot be identified with the ultimate end of man, it is a necessary consequence in history of the acknowledgement of God's purpose for man.

5. Man in Terms of Flesh, Body and Spirit

Three words used in the Bible for the interpretation of man and his relationship to ultimate reality deserve special consideration. They are *sarx* (flesh), *soma* (body) and *pneuma* (spirit). The New Testament, particularly St. Paul, uses *sarx* to describe the lower nature of man as against the higher nature. But the distinction between *sarx* and

pneuma is not the same as that between matter and spirit. *Sarx* rather represents man in his frailty and liability to death and corruption in contrast to God, the eternal, all powerful and incorruptible (W. D. Stacey: *The Pauline View of Man*, p. 157 f). Man as *sarx* is not man in fellowship with God, but man in contrast to God. W. D. Stacey rightly suggests that the best way to translate the expression *en sarki* is not 'fleshly' or 'carnal' but "worldly" (*op. cit.* p. 159). The contrast, therefore, between the mind of the flesh and the mind of the spirit which is an essential part of New Testament teaching does not imply that man is composed of two constituent elements. They describe two distinct states of being. The mind of the flesh is the consequence of life without God. It represents the state of sin. Flesh itself is not evil. What is evil is the self-reliance of the flesh leading to the deliberate rejection of God. It is not only the so-called sins of the body such as lust that is included in "the works of the flesh" (Gal. 5: 19). Jealousy, selfishness and party spirit are also works of the flesh. Further, life in the flesh can be lived without the corruption of sin. St. Paul says, "The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God" (Gal. 2: 20). The New Testament teaching is that Jesus Christ came in the flesh and was subject to all human temptation and was yet without sin (Col. 1: 22; Rom. 8: 3; Heb. 4: 15). The mind of the Spirit, then, refers to the restored relationship of man with God. It describes the life in which man's alienation from God and from one another is overcome by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The word *soma* is also crucial for the Biblical understanding of man. The Greek conception of man was expressed in the words *soma sema*, meaning that the soul was entombed in the body. Ultimately the soul should be liberated from the body. We have already seen that such a view is alien to Biblical thought. In many passages in the Pauline writings *sarx* and *soma* are used synonymously (1 Cor. 9: 27; 2 Cor. 4: 10, 11; 2 Cor. 5: 6; 2 Cor. 12: 7; Gal. 6: 17, etc.). But the word *soma* is used to bring out the higher destiny of man which is denied by the "mind of the flesh". J. A. T. Robinsons's study of the meaning of the Body shows the significance of the distinction between *sarx* and *soma*. Whereas the *sarx* represents primarily man's mortal nature, the *soma* represents human life that is capable of redemption. Both *sarx* and *soma* are subject to sin. But *soma* is the word used to speak of the life dedicated to God and the resurrection state. The Body is for the Lord and the Lord for the Body (1 Cor. 6 :13). The Body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6: 19). J. A. T. Robinson explains the distinction between *sarx* and *soma* in terms of two solidarities in which man is involved. *Sarx* stands for man in the solidarity of creation as alienated from God,

Soma stands for man in the solidarity of creation as made for God (*op. cit.*, p. 31). The use of the word *soma* also suggests that it is the centre of personal life. Robinson's study shows that it comes nearest to our conception of personality (W. D. Stacey: *Op. cit.* p. 190). Man is personal only in his involvement with other persons. This corporateness of human personality is brought out in the attributes of the *soma*. But man's corporate existence can represent either his fallen state or the state of redemption. So St. Paul speaks of the Body of Sin and death and the Body of Christ and the Resurrection Body. The Christian hope is the Redemption of the Body and the Resurrection of the Body (Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 15).

6. The Body of Christ

Thus man is involved in two solidarities, the solidarity of sin and the solidarity of redemption. The key to this conception of man and his destiny in the Biblical faith is the confession of Jesus Christ as the Divine Saviour of the world. Man's involvement in the solidarity of sin implies both a certain helplessness and responsibility leading to a sense of guilt. Man cannot save himself from his fallen state. At the same time salvation is not a mechanical process without responsible decision on the part of man. In the same way as man's fallen state is understood in the paradox of inevitability and responsibility, so also salvation is understood in the paradox of divine initiative and human response. God has taken the initiative in the redemption of man by sending Jesus Christ. In the incarnation of Jesus Christ we see the reconciliation of the two solidarities. Christ lived in the flesh and yet he was not involved in the sinfulness of the flesh. In Jesus Christ is revealed the divine image that man has lost in his sinful state. It is the Christian hope that the fulness of the divine image revealed in Jesus Christ will be restored to man. "It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). The Christian hope is that ultimately man shall be without blemish in the presence of God (Jude 24). Through faith in Jesus Christ even while living in the flesh man is given the experience of *jīvan mukta*. Through faith in Christ man is transferred from the solidarity of sin to the solidarity of redemption. It is in this sense that the Church is called the Body of Christ. It is a spiritual body marked by the common sharing of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism is the sacrament of this transfer. Isolated individual salvation, in which each individual may attain his own salvation, is contrary to Biblical faith. Our salvation is bound up with the salvation of the whole world and the final fulfilment of God's purpose. But

in the corporate life of the Church is given a foretaste of the Redemption. The believer is already given the experience of the Resurrection in the victory over sin. "The Body of Christ stands for that group of people in whom the body of death is dying away, for, after Baptism, after incorporation into the new body, the Body of Christ begins to replace the body of death" (W. D. Stacey, *Op. cit.*, p. 188).

7. The Response of Faith

The transfer from one solidarity to the other is not a mechanical process, even though the emphasis is on the divine initiative and the grace of God. There is no room for man's boasting as though salvation is in any way his achievement. But man has to respond in faith. God demands of man repentance and faith. The solidarity of salvation is described in the context of the personal relationship between God and man. Salvation, therefore, implies forgiveness of sin. The first condition of this is repentance. Jesus began his ministry by calling people to repent and believe in the Gospel (Mark 1:15). He said, "Unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:2). The Greek word for repent in the New Testament means literally "a change of mind"—it means a decision to turn from a life of sin to a life dedicated to God. This personal decision is taken in the context of faith in Christ. Repentance and faith go together. The one without the other is futile. They are together described as New birth.

The entry into the new solidarity is intimately and inseparably associated with the personal response of faith of every believer. Nothing in the solidarity of fallen creation such as race, nationality, culture, language or the like provides special qualifications to enter into the solidarity of the new creation of the Body of Christ. Faith is the necessary and sole condition of being in the new solidarity. The New Testament expression for believing in Christ literally means believing into Christ. It suggests the idea of entering into the new sphere of existence brought about by the redemptive work of Christ. The use of the present continuous tense in Greek in the New Testament for the description of the life of faith is also significant. It means that the recreation of man and the fulfilment of his destiny does not consist of merely a single act of faith, but a continuous life of faith accepting the life revealed in Jesus Christ. This is also the significance of the Christian confession of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God in His relationship with the world in the solidarity of redemption, whereby He continually keeps the believer in active remembrance of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and demands the decision of faith.

MAN IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

By Dr. A. E. Inbanathan

The purpose of this paper is to trace in outline the major developments in the doctrine of man through the centuries of the Christian era. The ideas presented in the Bible are dealt with in another paper; so our survey here begins with the second century which represents the period of the early Church.

In the Early Church

Christianity as a new religion embodying more or less revolutionary doctrines was already taking root in many parts around the Mediterranean. But the conflict with contemporary religious beliefs and cults prevailing in the lands of the Roman Empire was continuing. The Church had to fight the battle on many fronts: against the worship of the emperor enforced by the imperial powers, against mystery cults which had a fascination of their own for the common people, against Judaism which posed peculiar problems because it was both a preparation for the Christian Gospel as well as something that was transcended by the Gospel, and against the Gnostic movements which within the Church and without had become so attractive in their passion to create a universal religion. We get glimpses of the conflicts with these and other forces even within the pages of the New Testament. But the second century saw the further growth of opposition, which brought about the necessity for rational defence of the new Faith. The defenders had to equip themselves adequately through scholarship to meet the various challenges with certainty and wisdom. As it happens under such circumstances, out of the necessity of defence there also began systematic theological thinking. In order to engage oneself in a controversy, one needs to define clearly one's own position. Thus the early beginnings of systematic Christian theology were made during this period, and by the Apologists.

It can be said that throughout the history of Christian theology one of the issues in regard to anthropology was the definition of the nature and the effect of the 'Fall of man' described in the Bible. This issue has often been the centre of many controversies. The positions taken here have ranged from denying the effect of the Fall on posterity altogether to asserting the total depravity of man in his fallen state. It is indeed possible to understand the views of different Christian thinkers as so many varying interpretations of the Fall. Differences

in interpretation here give rise to differences in defining the dependence that can be placed on human judgment and philosophical speculation, as well as differences in understanding the role of divine grace in man's salvation.

Accepting the effect of the Fall, Tertullian (C. 160–240) discounted philosophy heavily and held the general view that philosophy was not a reliable interpreter of the divine nature and order. He asked "What is there in common between Athens and Jerusalem?.... Away with all projects for a 'Stoic', a 'Platonic' or a 'dialectic' Christianity' ". He held "heresies themselves are prompted by philosophy" (Bettenson, pp. 8 ff.), and emphasised man's depravity. He was also the first to suggest the doctrine of original sin. Irenæus too, like Tertullian, did not regard philosophy as being of any use in religion. On the other hand, the liberal-minded Justin (C. 150) went as far as to say "Christ is the first-born of God.... He is the reason (Word) of whom the whole human race partake and those who live according to reason are Christians, even though they are accounted atheists" (*Ibid.*, p. 6). Clement of Alexandria (C. 200) regarded philosophy as a school-master to bring the Greek mind to Christ, as the Law brought the Hebrews, and the Alexandrian school used theories held in Greek philosophy to explain Christian doctrine. For example, Origen (*d.* 254), a pupil of Clement, and the foremost representative of the Alexandrian School, accepted the theory of the pre-existence of the soul, and held the view that the actions of the souls in their pre-existent state determined the situations of men in the world of history, even with regard to such things as parental origin, place of birth, region and environment in which this earthly life is spent.

The Apologists agreed on the whole in rejecting the Stoic fatalism. So they often leaned heavily on the side of emphasizing the freedom of the will. Man is endowed with this freedom by means of which he has the ability to make decisions in favour of goodness and truth. He learns to use this faculty properly and correctly through Jesus' teaching. Such in general was the thought that the Apologists represented. In their anxiety to avoid any foothold for fatalism they do not seem to give adequate consideration to the powers of darkness that also form a part of man's nature. It was left to a later century to bring to the fore the inadequacy and the onesidedness of the thought of this earlier era. Until then the tradition left by the Apologists held ground so well that a challenge to it became an occasion for a fierce controversy which lasted a long time. Pelagius and Augustine were the chief participants in this debate, and because of the clarity with which they stated the issues they have placed future generations in

a deep debt of gratitude. Never since that time has it been possible to discuss such matters as freedom of will, nature of man and salvation by grace, without drawing upon their thinking.

Augustine and Pelagius

Pelagius, hailed from the British Isles, was a monk who lived in the late fourth century. He visited Rome and was distressed at the low state of conduct there. While he was feeling that more moral effort was needed there, he came across the prayer of St. Augustine's "Give what thou commandest and command what thou wilt", which gave him a shock. He threw himself against the whole view represented by that prayer and wrote profusely attacking Augustine's teachings. Chiefly he dealt with the concept of human freedom, the universality of sin, and the role of divine grace in man's salvation. On human freedom, he maintained that this freedom was real and inalienable to man. By exercising it, and choosing the good man comes into harmony with God. It is not right to say that man has ever lost this ability, or that at any time man will sin inevitably. Regarding sin, Pelagius denied both 'original' sin and sin as a condition of man's nature. He looked upon the fall of Adam as an insignificant act, with no meaning for his posterity. Newborn infants, therefore, do not need to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins; they are in the same conditions as Adam before the Fall. Sin enters a man when there is the attraction of evil examples. Added to these, of course, is the power that is produced in a man through his continued practice of sinning. At this point Pelagius admitted even a necessity of sinning, but his admission was in respect of individuals; he did not recognise that humanity as a whole was involved in the sad state where sin becomes inevitable. However, proceeding from the understanding of human freedom and sin as outlined above, Pelagius saw divine grace not as enabling man to do the good, but rather as merely enlightening man's reason so that he can see God's Will and choose accordingly. The role he assigned to divine grace was one of assisting man to do what he is already capable of doing. Continuing the logic of this, the followers of Pelagius argued that as man can do the right even without such divine aid, grace was only relatively (not absolutely) necessary.

Over against such doctrines, Augustine brought out many arguments from Scripture and from personal experience, to show that man in his natural condition is incapable of doing the good or even of co-operating with divine grace. Unless God's grace was already present in man, he could not make the right response, even man's faith is the gift of God. In this Augustine had scriptural authority (Rom. 9:16; I Cor. 4:7; Phil. 2:13) as well as the authority of his own conversion

experience which convinced him that unless God's grace had already been with him he could not have opened his heart to the operation of His Spirit.

Augustine did not deny free-will but showed that the incapacity of sinful man was the result of his sin. "How can a will be free if it is under the domination of unrighteousness?" Because divine aid is necessary it should not be taken that man has no free-will; it only means that "freedom of choice avails for the performance of good works if it receives divine assistance". "This free-will will be the more free the more it is healthy; and it will be the more healthy the more it is subject to the divine mercy and grace."

On the Fall, Augustine's interpretation ran as follows: Adam's act was motivated by pride; he wanted to be his own master, and therefore refused to obey God. His sin was the sin of the whole human race; as a personal act, the first sin was not our act, but human nature was present in Adam, and his act was, therefore, the common act of mankind. Through pride Adam sinned, and from then on the soul lost control over the body, and the mind became carnal turning to things low and uncertain. This was Augustine's conception of original sin, which he also believed was biologically transmitted from parent to child. Because of original sin, a man had the bias toward sin. Original sin accounted for man's bias toward sin, and to that extent his freedom also was unreal.

It is divine grace alone that can restore man; it operates as a divine creative act, removing man's ignorance and incapacity to choose the right. In this emphasis on grace particularly Augustine followed closely the teaching of St. Paul, who in the earlier days of Christianity fought with determination against reliance upon man's innate powers and against the cheapening of the Gospel to a mere moral teaching.

Augustine's contribution in this area earned for him the gratitude of Christian thinkers of later centuries. It is interesting to note that at the time of the Reformation, both the Roman Catholic Church and the Reformers invoked the authority of Augustine to support their particular view-point. However, one of the doctrines that Augustine developed in his later years did not achieve the same universal acceptance. It was his doctrine of Predestination, in which he held that God's grace was irresistible and predestinating. If this grace lays hold of man, man cannot resist. Perhaps we should see here Augustine's own personal experience by reflecting upon which he could see how it would have been impossible for him to turn of his own accord towards God, but that it was the overwhelming grace of God which

alone could have brought about his conversion. It was therefore a statement of religious experience rather than a philosophical discovery.

It seemed to him, that others who were saved should also have been so intended by God, and, indeed, the number of such people had been fixed from eternity. God's grace will find them, and they cannot resist it. This, however, raised the question whether the opposite group, namely the unsaved, had also been similarly predetermined. Augustine held so, and declared their damnation had also been predetermined. When it was pointed out that this imputed a certain arbitrariness to Providence, Augustine affirmed that man had no right to question God; but he must bow before his Creator and humbly accept His will. Here Augustine shows influence of Neo-Platonism which formed part of his early training. His doctrine of God resembles the Neo-Platonic conception of the transcendence and unknowableness of God.

Augustine's great contribution was the effective way in which he counteracted the influence of Pelagius. He rightly showed that God's Will is not a mere collection of moral maxims, and that the sinful acts of man are not to be considered separately from their organic basis in a depraved nature. The clash was between two different conceptions of Christianity. Although the conflict was not settled then, nor at any time later, it brought to the fore fundamental issues which require careful study. If Pelagianism did not die immediately it was partly because Pelagius was more guilty of onesidedness and over-emphasis than of a wholly wrong doctrine, and partly because Augustine seemed to many to have over-stated his case when he postulated his doctrine of Predestination. It seemed necessary to them to declare that a predestination of man to perdition was untenable. Even though the utter inability of natural man in spiritual matters and the necessity of ascribing to God the primary and sole agency in salvation were clearly confessed, Pelagian influence continued, and in the form known as Semi-Pelagianism. According to this type of thinking, original sin was defined in negative terms, as the lack of original righteousness, the loss of the additional endowment of grace to control lower desires.

Thomas Aquinas

The great age of Thomas Aquinas saw a brief return to Augustinian emphasis, and God as the moving power in effecting man's conversion was once again postulated. But Aquinas could not follow Augustine in the latter's denial of the reality of free-will in natural man. He insisted that man was free to use his will as to the preparation for grace. This made salvation a gradual process of human

recovery. In later developments in this field the stress fell on human efforts, so that inordinate attention to man's good works became inevitable. A man earns merit through good works. A man may even earn more merit than are necessary for his salvation. Thus a treasury of merit is created through the surplus, and this treasury is at the disposal of the Pope and administered by the priests for the benefit of the souls in purgatory.

Reformation

The above-mentioned development set the stage for that great upheaval, the Reformation, in which Martin Luther and his colleagues led the revolt against prevailing distortions of the doctrine of salvation, both within the Church and without. Beginning as a criticism of the low moral state of the clergy and of the abuse of political power by the Church, the movement soon acquired theological depth, and developed decisive challenge to doctrinal foundations accepted by contemporary Christianity. The reformers also had to forge intellectual weapons to fight against the pretensions of humanist philosophy, which, after Renaissance, was making rapid headway. Philosophy in this period claimed that a cure for the world's ills could be found if religion became moralism and stripped itself of all its supernatural features and if human reason could be enthroned above all else including faith and devotion to God.

Although the immediate context of ecclesiastical life and intellectual climate gave form and determined the scope of the Reformation, there resulted from it many findings of universal significance. This was because the movement was essentially religious, prompted by the needs and longings of the soul of man. As one writer put it, "In that deep religious experience through which Luther gave birth to the material principle of the Reformation it was not the German but rather the human in him that came to an expression. In his devout struggle after a sense of peace with God he had gone down to those profound depths where incidentals and particulars are forgotten and where one is on a level with the very elements of human nature. His prophetic genius touched the very heart-strings of human interests and human passions and struck a theme of universal appeal. In his search after a merciful God and the assurance of forgiven sin he rose far above all circumstances of time and place. That is why his experience can be universally valid wherever human consciences can be awakened to a sense of sin."

Although the Reformation issued a primary call to return to the Bible, it was not a mere restatement of things already known, it was a further development of Christian doctrine on scriptural foundations

Luther recovered the Augustinian emphasis on the inability of man to make by himself any God-ward gesture. He refuted the prevailing conclusion of scholasticism, which endowed speculative philosophy with ability to know God (Luther never lost sight of the fact that it was sinful man who was making the search for God), and the view that God was blissfully resting in Himself and enjoying Himself. His rejection of the metaphysical conceptions of God was followed by reiteration of a religious thought, where the greatness of God is known in His moral superiority. Man therefore had an obligation in moral terms, and was faced with the demand to love God and his neighbour. Man does not prepare himself to approach God through pious deeds, as though morality were a prior condition to religious relationships. Man is given the free gift of God's grace, which is given without any reference to any work-righteousness. Here is therefore assurance of salvation to man in his distress of sin and guilt. This Gospel of God's love towards sinful man, love shown through Jesus Christ, begets in man an infinitely rich love so that he cannot do otherwise than try to live and act according to God's Will. Human wisdom having set its attention on God's infinite wisdom, power, etc., fails to see God in His suffering role. To the "wise" men, therefore, it is ridiculous that God should be faced with the necessity of giving Himself in order to remain true to His love. To them Christ the humble and suffering servant could not be the revelation of God. But a simple man, who does not start with presuppositions of his own about what God ought to be like, can, through faith, see the very form of God in the dying Christ.

On the problem of sin Luther made very shrewd observations, which reveal great depth in his understanding of the problem. He commented, "Man can do nothing but seek only his own and love himself above all things; that is the greatest of all things. Thus in what is good and virtuous, man seeks himself, that is, that he may please himself." This self-seeking will, often without our being conscious of it, lays hold of our best resolutions, especially of those in the religious sphere. Thus we may love God solely for the sake of His gifts, or for our salvation and eternal blessedness, or from the fear of hell; we then love Him with a love that is already impure because it is directed to ourselves and aims at our own benefits. Part of sin is our ingenuity to deceive ourselves into thinking that we are loving God, while we are merely loving ourselves. Self-love can masquerade in us, without our knowing it, as the noblest altruism.

Although Luther painted the above distressing picture of sinful man, he did not fail to notice that there was also in man the consciousness of a higher destiny. This consciousness was what caused feelings

of guilt on the commission of sin. Although sinful man cannot but sin, he nevertheless feels that he should have and could have acted differently. This consciousness, while it places responsibility on man for his sins, does not, however, help the solution of man's difficulty. His past and present sins continue to weigh on his mind and plunge him into despair. The more he thinks of extricating himself the more he gets involved. As he is only thinking of his own salvation, the more he desires it the more selfish he becomes. Even the so-called "good" works hide beneath the surface only a mounting self-love. The situation becomes hopeless, and at the end only despair results.

God brings a totally different remedy, not anticipated by philosophers and seemingly "foolish" to them. Impelled by the motive of love, He regards sinful man as "just" when he turns toward Him with an attitude of faith. Any other striving on the part of man comes to nothing. Since it proceeds from him, it only ends by making him more self-centred. The way out is made possible by God's grace which is received through faith.

The Age of Humanism

The effects of the great contribution made by the Reformation did not last as they deserved. The forces generated by the Renaissance resulted in attitudes which could no longer recognize in Luther a correct diagnosis of the human malady, nor a corrective against earlier aberrations. The beginning of industries, the rapid advances made by scientific and technical knowledge produced a climate of thought and an estimate of man which made the Reformation look needlessly pessimistic. The high point of optimism in human nature, and belief in human progress was reached in the late nineties, when the climate was one of hope in man. Creeds which spoke of man as sinner came to be regarded old-fashioned, as relics of an old age, products of erroneous understanding.

With scientific discoveries and methods of research and deduction, reason came to be extolled as the supreme bar at which all claims including those of religion were tested. Matters which could not be subjected to scientific research and were not capable of demonstrable proofs were dismissed as unworthy of attention. Only things that appealed to reason could be accepted; any appeal to faith was put down as a clear indication of weakness. Schools of Rationalism sprang up in various countries, and propounded the dogma of the innate goodness of man and the claim that by ethical education and enlightenment he can be made good and happy. The Bible was read from a different point of view, and such leading ideas as the Kingdom of God

came to be interpreted not in terms of God's lordship, but in terms of human achievement and progress. However, even while such claims were being made there were, of course, ample signs of greed, jealousy, exploitation and selfishness all around. But somehow during this age the beast in man was not being sufficiently noticed, and it was the early years of the twentieth century that saw the challenge to rationalist and humanist pretensions.

The Modern Period

It was Karl Barth who sounded the first call against reliance on human endeavours and against what he called the "bourgeois christianity" of theological liberalism. Barth's theology was a corrective and it made a new departure in theological thought. Later followers of his have noted over-statements in him which, at the time they were made, might have been necessary to produce effect. But it goes to the credit of Barth that he managed to alter the trends of Christian thinking and bring them nearer to the Bible. Here is a quotation about the impact he made. "To a humanism which understands itself, the ideas of God, sin and death have lost all importance, except as symbols which proved of temporary advantage in the past. Barth replies that there is a living God, and that God has spoken. With a volcanic vehemence—feeling that passion alone is suited to the occasion—he is endeavouring to draw the Christian mind of his generation back to the truth in which all other truth that counts is embraced, *viz.*, that in the Bible God has uttered His absolute and ineffably gracious will."

The movement started by Karl Barth gathered momentum, and soon the truth of his new emphasis was being increasingly recognised. The two World Wars and other events exposed the hollowness of a simple belief in human progress and humanism received a rude challenge. Modern age saw a plunge from the brightest hopes to darkest hopelessness. When there is a climax of understanding of justice there is also alongside sadism and cruelty. The pinnacles of success are also dotted with new forms of evil. This century has seen worse acts of barbarism and inhuman behaviour than perhaps any other. When man can boast of more control over natural forces than ever before, at that very point he is also being shaken with fear of complete self-destruction.

There has been during the last four decades an anxious searching for the causes that underlie this human predicament. This search has not been restricted to Christian thinkers; in some cases the search has produced a more balanced estimate of human nature, but the view still was that there was no permanent root of evil in man, that at birth

he was morally neutral and that evil tendencies were due to environment. In others there has resulted a form of cynicism or despair. The predominant trends in Protestant Christian thinking, represented by such men as H. H. Farmer, Reinhold Niebuhr, John Bennett, John Baillie and Emil Brunner may be summarized as follows:

1. There is a recognition of the dual nature of man. He was created good, but is now no longer good. The 'Fall' is not to be taken as a temporal event, not even as a statement on origin of sin but as an affirmation of this dual nature, that man was created good and yet is a fallen creature.

2. There is at present a serious endeavour at defining the state of man. Particularly this has centred round the phrase "image of God" in which, the Bible says, man was created. What does the phrase mean? If we can know its meaning, we have some understanding of man. One explanation is that the 'image' refers to 'relationship'. If man was created in the image of God, it means, he was created to be in responsible relationship with God. Through man's disobedience this relationship was broken. Another explanation is that the 'image' refers to that extra-faculty which distinguishes man from an animal. This faculty gives him the ability to transcend himself, and look at himself from 'outside' as it were, from another perspective, from the point of view of conscience, etc. In this self-transcendence man partakes of the infinite, because he can watch himself watching himself!

Yet a third explanation makes out that the 'image' refers to man's creative ability. The variety of meanings given is an indication of the serious manner in which people are engaging themselves to answer the question, "What is man?"

In spite of being created in the image of God, man is in such a state that the image is obviously distorted. Whatever meaning is given to the word 'image' it is clear that there has come about somehow a distortion. Man still retains, however, the capacity to be addressed by God, or to put it in other terms, he remains within the orbit of divine grace.

3. Another recovery in modern Christian literature is the point, that the essence of sin is unbelief, and the opposite of sin is faith. Man was created with the object of having loving faith towards God, but unbelief creeps in, man distrusts God, sin enters human life. Therefore, the opposite of sin is not moralistic righteousness, but an attitude of trust and faith towards God.

4. In regard to the concept of sin, we see now, that it is inadequate to use here moralistic terms (*i.e.*, limiting sin to those acts for which

man is totally responsible and where other possibilities exist). There are modern instances where atrocities were committed by a person (or persons) who honestly believed that they were doing the right thing. If sin were limited to acts of deliberate evil choice, these acts of self-deception in which there is no choice, are left unexplained. Present tendency in theological thinking, therefore, is to recognise the pervasiveness of sin; no area is exempt from the perversion of sin, not even the reasoning faculty of Christian theologians!

Sin is universal, and all men are sinful. Claims of righteousness are based on superficial considerations, and are, in fact, indicative of self-idolatry—putting oneself as the centre of life—which is sin. Failure to recognize is sometimes due to complexity of situations where influences, causes and motives are hidden. But this should not obscure the fact all men are sinners.

It should be noted here, that this emphasis on the sinfulness of man is the chief feature of modern Christian thinking on the subject. It is different from the earlier views of sin as 'imperfection', in that it is described in such positive terms as rebellion against God, as a state of contradiction against God and fellow-man. There is today even a preoccupation with the 'sins of the righteous', and it is rightly pointed out that the greater the avoidance of conscious wrong-doing and the self-discipline for the sake of a cause believed to be the Will of God, the greater the danger of sin. The so-called righteous people are the ones most reluctant to see that what they are doing is only partly God's Will. "Man is a problem to himself not chiefly because of his more obvious vices, but because the very strength in him, the better part of his effort and aspiration, so continually goes wrong."

5. A further point to note in modern thinking is the recognition that the redeemed man too is not free from sin. The dangers of self-righteousness persist. Hence, the necessity of continuous repentance. Salvation makes enough difference so that one's centre of interest as well as the direction of life are no longer as before, but it should not be assumed that on any level of moral or spiritual growth there is immunity against sin. In fact sin at such levels is not only a possibility, but actually exists; often fresh sin appears at each new level of moral achievement.

Although there is this challenge and warning against too complacent a belief in saintly perfection, there is no denial of all difference in moral growth. But such differences are due to God's creative work, and are tokens of God's Kingdom. Man may take no credit for them. Also, while possibilities of secular progress in history are recognised, there is warning against identifying human achievements with the Kingdom of God.

THE DOCTRINE OF PERSONALITY
As a Hindu Theist understands it

By Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao

Sophocles, the great Greek dramatist, acclaimed that "wonders are many, but there is no wonder wilder than man". Among all the objects in the world the human being presents the most significant spectacle and he has been the object of concern and thought to all the thinkers and philosophers. The vision of the Hindu seers, the vigil of the saints and the speculation of philosophers have centred round man. The scientists have all acclaimed that man is the compound of the same matter, as the rest of the universe, operated by the same energy as the other organisms. "Man is a compound of a few pounds of carbon, a few quarts of water, a little phosphorus and sulphur, a pinch of iron and silicon and a handful of mixed salts." Like all other organisms we are also self-producing patterns of metabolism, depending on the same apparatus of enzymes and genes as they. We share the animal drives, instincts, emotions and habits. There is nothing unique in man about all these matters. The great Śankara raises the question, "When every form without any distinction is a modification of matter and the lineal descendant of Ultimate Reality (*Brahman*), why should man alone be singled out here?" To this question Śankara's answer is, "Man is the principal object in creation". Why is he the principal object? Śankara sums up the unique nature of man in a great phrase,[1] "*karma jñānādhikārāt*". He is capable of knowledge and moral freedom, *i.e., freedom of will.* In the words of Julian Huxley, "We are animals with this difference, that we are capable of reasoning and conceptual thought, creative imagination and communication by speech symbols." Besides this, man has a moral sense, a capacity to choose the right from the wrong. He is no doubt determined by several factors, physical, psychological and environmental and yet in a sense is he free to rise above the dictates of the forces that govern him. Human personality is not completely determined as a particle of matter.

The conception of human personality is central to all religions and philosophies. The term personality is not employed here in its current psychological sense. It does not mean the mask one wears, the way a person affects others, nor is it his reputation. It is not even

[1] Śankara's commentary on *Taittirīya Upanishad*, II, 1, 1.

the sum of his mechanical and psychological dispositions. It s, according to Hindus of all persuasions, "the uncreated, eternal, essence of man". It is popularly called the soul or the *jīvā*. The soul, for the Hindu theist, is infinite in number. It is a spiritual principle that animates the human body and vivifies it. The soul expresses itself in the tenement of the body. The soul's departure from the body is called death. The human body is the case or the instrument through which the soul works. The characteristics of the soul are described vividly and comprehensively in the second chapter of the *Gītā*. The souls are infinite. "Never was there a time, when the souls were not nor there ever will be a time, when they shall cease to be. The soul in a number of births passes through different bodies as easily, as we grow from childhood to youth and from youth to age. The soul is indestructible, immutable, unslayable and eternal. They are never born, nor do they die at any time. They are permanent, eternal and uncreated. They pass on from one body to another at death, as one casts away worn out garments and puts on new ones."[2] The plurality of eternal souls is accepted by the Hindu theists. The soul is also described as the principle of consciousness, knowledge and bliss in a limited degree. It animates the body. The body is described as physical and insentient in its nature. The individual soul is encased in the body and mind and works through them, and yet it is different from them. The *Upanishads* and the Hindu epics describe the way in which the soul is located in the body. The soul is located in *three frames* [called respectively, (*i*) the gross body—*sthūla śarīra*; (*ii*) the subtle body—*sūkṣma śarīra*; and (*iii*) the causal body—*kāraṇa śarīra*]. One is within the other. The outermost is the gross body. Further in the *Taittiriya Upanishad* (3rd chapter) we have the description that the soul of man is veiled by a succession of five sheaths called *kośas*. Each sheath is placed one within the other. The five sheaths represent the progressive stages of evolution. The outermost sheath is the *material one*. It is followed by the *vital*, and that by the *sheath of consciousness*. The vital represents the biological stage of evolution. That corresponds to the organic sector in Reality. The sheath of consciousness represents the psychological state. It is the human stage. The fourth sheath is the *sheath of self-consciousness*. It is called *buddhi* or intellect. It is the *agent of actions* and the enjoyer of fruits. The fifth and the innermost sheath is called the *sheath of bliss*. The soul rests in the sheath of bliss. Man is made in God's image, in the sense that he is capable of bliss and knowledge. One school of Vedanta explains this metaphor, to mean, that man is dependent on God, as the image or the prototype. It indicates a relation

[2] *Gītā*, II. 12–25.

of dependence rather than one of equality or identity. The soul of man is the essence of human personality. The intrinsic original nature of the soul is bliss and knowledge. The soul of man is from the beginning of time affected by *karma*. *Karma* is the evil that attaches to the personality of the soul, resulting from the *immoral* and *sinful* actions of the soul when it lives in a body. Immoral actions are those that are anti-social and anti-human. Violation of the general rules of morality and duties of one's station in life are described as immoral acts (*i.e.*, *adharmic* acts). Sinful acts are those in which the individual asserts his autonomy and indulges in God-eclipsing activities. His acts which make him forget or deny his dependence on God are sinful acts. The moment a man tries to live on the strength of his puny will by taking anxious thought for the morrow, he becomes sinful. Sin consists in forgetting that kingdom, knowledge, power and glory are God's. Forgetting to live in the experience that without God we can do nothing, except sin, *is* sin.

Sin and immorality are responsible for the individual's repeated births. Hindu theism holds the view that men are responsible for their lot in life. As they sow, so they reap. The individual is provided the chance to better himself for a number of births to work out his *karma* and realise as a consequence of it his high destiny, *i.e.*, *mokṣa*. Unless the individual soul works out and expiates all his sins and acquires a state of life and lives in loving experience of the Lord, he does not attain his salvation. The pre-condition of salvation is the elimination of selfishness and unconditional loving surrender to the will of God. "Thy will be done." For this, man has to replace God's will in him by displacing his will. The doctrine of rebirth provides a succession of spiritual opportunities to the soul for the act of perfecting himself. Rebirth is determined by the *karma* of the individual. This makes for confident optimism, *i.e.*, "I am responsible for my fortune and my misfortune". There is no dark unknown cloud hanging over our deeds. We are not in the hand of an unscrutable dark destiny that shapes our life on earth. *Karma* makes for the freedom of will in man and gives him the courage that he is the captain of his acts. It makes for moral responsibility and none can and should bemoan his lot. It makes men not bitter or jealous of other men's fortunes in life. The faith that there is a moral order and that what I do makes for my life, and that men get what they deserve takes away the bitterness in life. It accounts for the inequality in lots of different men. It also takes away the stain of arbitrariness that some attribute to God, in assigning him the duty of giving us different gifts. The Lord distributes the gifts of life according to the *karma* of the individual. He has no partiality for any one. Śankara writes, "Passion and malice would have

to be ascribed to God, which attributes would be contrary to the essential goodness of the Lord. The fact is that beings are born according to their merits and demerits in the past. The position of the Lord is to be looked upon as analogous to that of the giver of rain (*parjanya*). For as rain is the cause of the production of rice, barley and other plants, while the difference between the various species is due to the potentialities lying hidden in the respective seeds. So the Lord is the common cause of the creation of gods, men, etc., while the differences between these classes of beings are due to the differences in the merit belonging to the individual. Hence, the Lord cannot be reproached with inequality of dispensation and cruelty."[3] *Karma* implies a free doer. The faculty of choosing is the function of his will. He can and does struggle against the sway of his past impulses, appetites and lusts. He is not merely the plaything of the past. He is not an helpless creature of his past unless he chooses to be so. *Karma* affirms freedom of man. *Karma* is self-determinism and not the working out of an external force. The law of *karma* urges every man to perform good deeds and to exert himself to overcome his own misdeeds. It does not make him indifferent to others good, for such an attitude will react on him.

The personality of the individual soul gets involved into the *karmic* tangle. That is bondage, *i.e.*, *samsāra*. To get rid of it the soul of man has to live a life of cermonial purity and ethical excellence. Mere ethical life is not enough, it has to be rooted in the loving unconquerable faith in the Lord. As in Christianity, so in Hindu theism too, our first loyalty is to God. Of the two commandments the first is most important. We must love God with all our heart and soul. All activities must be god-centred if they are not to bind us to temporal life. The grace of the Lord is the solvent and the liberating fact for man. Man must prepare himself for grace. He cannot condition it. Man must foreswear his foolish ways and turn back to the Lord and lay down his arms. The return of the prodigal son is significant. We are not merely imperfect creatures, but are rebels who must render back our wills to God, which we have so long claimed for our own. Our self-will is swollen with long years of usurpation. It is difficult to break it by ourselves. It resists all thwarting with bitter rage, passionate tears, with threats to kill and die, rather than give in.

The Hindu theists regard that the individual soul is imperfect when he is not living in conscious loving relation with the Lord. The restoration of the right relationship between God and man makes man a *personality*. Crude individuality blossoms into personality only with the onset of grace. Surrender to the Lord sets right the

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[3] Śankara's *Vedānta Sūtra*, II, 1, 34.

misdirection of our nature. Hindu theism finds man's perfection in becoming a perfect instrument in His hands. This can be had only by the grace of the Lord. But the grace of the Lord is not conditioned. The spirit bloweth where it listeth. "The high and best way thither is run by desires and not by feet. For he may be loved, not thought. By love may he be begotten and holden but by thought never," says the unknown author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. The *Upanishads* declare "that *mokṣa*, *i.e.*, the development of the individual into a personality, can never be attained by intellect, nor the study of Veda, nor by much learning; it is attained by him whom God chooses". The grace of the Lord does not work in an arbitrary manner. The God of Hinduism is potentially capable of doing the impossible, but he does not do so. He works within a framework He has himself erected. So he does not save all souls. The soul's nature is not so completely carnal. Souls are not devoid of the glimmer of the divine light. They have the potentiality to become perfect. The Lord helps them according to their *karma*. The importance of grace does not belittle the value of morality. The *Upanishad* insists on morality. The very next passage that describes the glory of the grace warns us. It says, "One who has not desisted from bad conduct, whose senses are not under control, whose mind is not concentrated, whose mind is not free from anxiety, cannot attain this self, through mere knowledge."[5] Perfect integration of human personality is possible only when morality is touched with grace. Grace never sanctifies the morally impure.[6] Grace does not go against *karma*. If the Christian theism makes God redeem fallen man by his act of vicarious grace, Hindu theism accepts the immanence of God, but sees that man does his work under the supervision of God. The moral order and *karma* are not so much the limitation of God as His will.

The fact of grace being responsible for man's perfection is considered by some as depriving man his effort and dignity. According to *Rāmānuja*, the Prince among India's theists, if the securing of the perfection of man were left to the sweet will of man, he would never attain it. Man's love of his own perfection or *mokṣa* is not certain. It is because God is responsible for man's salvation he has it. The greatest good a man does is to place his life in the hands of the best. The doctrine of grace makes both for a moral religion, and a spiritual morality.

There is the vexed question as to what is the purpose of man's life according to the Indian theists. We often ask the question of the Psalmist. "Is man made in vain? Is he merely given away to misery

[4] *Katha Upanishad*, I, 2, 23.
[5] *Ibid.*, I, 2, 24.
[6] *Ācāra-hīnān na punanti vedāh* (*Vasishta Sūtra*), VI, 3.

and mortality? Tortured in life and swallowed up in death? No, man has a nobler destiny. He is to become the perfect instrument in the hands of the Lord. He should become the perfect servant of the Lord. He seeks first of all to perfect his personality and then tries his best to establish the kingdom of God on earth. He regards life on earth as the preparatory, useful training ground for the art of his spiritual perfection. He regulates his life on earth in all its modes. He seeks to incorporate values in life. One would hardly seek to realise values in life, unless life itself is valuable for us. Life is a great value. It is not a vain show. The Hindu theist believes with Tennyson that "this world is not a blind accident, but is a wise plan. Nothing walks with an aimless feet". The goal of perfection for man does not consist in the physical fulfilment of his desires, nor does the Hindu ask him to suppress all his desire. He has to rise above both. It involves transcendence. Man must seek to make his life an instrument and vehicle for the great purposes of God. Willing surrender to the Lord's desires is not slipping back to the level of stocks and stones. The author of the *Gītā* in a celebrated phrase declares "that he has desire in many". That is not contrary to righteousness. We are enjoined not to be blind to things. We are asked to look at all things not through the mists of passions but through the vision of God.

To the Hindu theists human life is neither an amusement park nor is it an arena of conflict. It is not even a vale of tears. The nature of life on earth, to Hindu theists, depends on his view-point. If he sees in it the training ground for his development it is good. It is excellent provided man is able to reflect adequately God on earth and his law in all the institutions. It is not fair to describe the Hindu theist's position as one that has no reverence for life. It affirms the value of life and he does not preach "the ethics of life-negation". Further, he believes that one life is not enough and provides a scheme of several lives for man to perfect himself. It never denies the value of life. The entire human life is to be so lived as to make us fit to receive the grace. The Hindu theist's entire morality is based on his religion of the love of God. He seeks to do God's will in every walk of life. He is not merely to take the name of the Lord. The *Vishnu Purāna* declares, "Those who give up their duties and simply proclaim the name of the Lord Krishna, are verily the enemies of the Lord and are sinners for the purpose of the Lord's *avatāra* is the protection of *dharma*." This sentiment switches our mind on to the words of Jesus, "Not every one that calls 'Christ' Lord, but he that does the will of the Father, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

The Hindu theists integrate all the three values of life adumbrated in Hindu ethics, possessions, passions, righteousness (*artha*, *kāma* and

dharma) into the religious life called *mokṣa*, or salvation. The first three values can be divided into two kinds: instrumental and regulating values.[7] Instrumental values are wealth and possessions. The Hindu theists have never glorified an ideal of utter poverty. Nor have they glorified the glamour of merely acquiring riches. They have stated that man should earn his livelihood by honest methods for the sake of living a healthy, normal, moral life. They have not admired a bare life verging on asceticism. The huge literature in India about the arts and crafts, drama, music, dance, sculpture, and architecture is ample evidence of the richness of their life. Theirs is not a wordly religion but that does not mean that they embraced a world-regarding ideal. They invented the chess and they were first to give the world the art of short stories. They did live a full, lively and robust life of happiness. The money one earns must not be selfishly spent on only himself. He is asked to hold it as a trust and protect his family and give in charity as much as he can. He is asked not to grab all that there is in the world. The *Bhāgavata Purāna* advocates a sort of spiritual socialism and defines the right attitude we should have towards wealth. "Living beings have a right only up to what is necessary for satisfying their hunger, he who feels like acquiring more is a thief and deserves punishment."[8]

There is a misconception in some minds that in Hinduism the development of human personality to the spiritual stage is attained by a violent rupture with ordinary life. It needs the giving up and involves the neglect of all social and human goods. It is not so. There is nothing in Hindu theism to support this contention. They have so planned their social life and their scheme of orderly values in life as to relate and lead man or from the human to the spiritual. They have never despised the vital aims, the human obligations and the natural instincts in man nor denied their legitimate rôles. The Hindu sociologist, Manu, requires of us and insists that man should pass his life stage by stage conscientiously with knowledge. Man should work out the values and accept its enjoyment. The Hindu scheme of the four-fold values and four-fold stages of life, respectively called *puruṣārthas* and *āśramas* have deep psychological foundations. They believe that individuals differ in their training and temperament and all must not be forced into the same procrustean bed. The four-fold successive stages of life are: that of the student (*brahmacāri*), that of the householder (*grihastha*), the life of the recluse (*vānaprastha*), the fourth is the life of the *sannyāsi*. The individual grows through all

[7] *Yāvat bhriyeta jñātāram tāvat svatvamhi adhikam yo'bhimanyeta sa steno daṇḍam arhat, Bhāgavata*, VII, 14, 8.

these stages. The four-fold stages of life answer to the different needs of man in the growth of his life. He attains the spiritual goal only by progressive training in all the stages. The inspiring idea behind the scheme is that man is not to stagnate at his physical and animal life. He must pass from the biological to the rational and from the rational to the social, and from the social to the universal, and from the universal to the religious.

The Hindu concept of wealth and its legitimate pursuit is described in the *Rāmāyana* in eloquent terms.[8] It should not be sought as an end in itself nor as an exclusive means for self-indulgence and the gratification of one's sensual desires.

The Hindu theists have always insisted upon a certain degree of freedom from indigence and want. Some minimum economic competence is the prerequisite of all religious life. The second instrumental value is called *kāma*, *i.e.*, passion. It is not merely sensual desires. Passions are the basic urges in man. Man expresses his life in his drives, emotions, instincts, and urges. The Hindu theists are against a life of unrestricted self-indulgence. A careful cultivation of taster and calculated indulgence of passions is advocated. We are asked not to repress and thwart our impulses but to harness them and sublimate their goal. The life of the householder is described in glowing terms. Marriage is prescribed for all and on occasions it is insisted as a must. The rôle of the wife is glorified. Her spiritual nature and complementary assistance to man is given a good place. The householder is to practise what is described as the five *yajñās* (sacrifices).[9] He should descharge his duties to the neighbours, guests, ancestors. He is the support of all around him. Human love and kindness to all and the practice of general virtues such as, truth, non-violence non-stealing, etc., are insisted on. He has according to Vedic traditions to discharge a three-fold debt in life. He has a debt to the ancestors. The discharge of this debt is to grow the progeny and continue the race. The second debt is the one he owes to the deities. This he discharges by offering prayers and sacrifies. The third debt is the debt to the sages. This is discharged by man through his study of the religious scriptures. The householder's life is admired and it is described on occasions as better than the life of the anchorite and the *sannyāsi*. The Hindu theists at no stage neglect the value of social ethics and obligation to men. They look upon all human beings as the manifestation of the Lord. They serve the God in man. They advocate a kind of spiritual humanism. In the face of this massive evidence and rich life it is not correct to describe "that the Hindu

[8] *Rāmāyana*, VI, 83, 32–38.

[9] (*i*) to the spirits; (*ii*) to the ancestors; (*iii*) to the gods; (*iv*) to the Brahmans; (*v*) to men in general.

neglects the human side of his life and regards the world as a snare and delusion". The theists do not do it. They look upon the world as the magnificent manifestation of the Lord. All work is for the Lord. Every duty, social and individual, for the Hindu theist stands in vital relation to his God-love. The Hindu theist's view of life is an integrated whole, where each part fits in and is informed by the love of God.

The Hindu theist looks on human life as a great opportunity for the development of his personality. The third value he accepts is called *dharma*. *Dharma* is a regulating value. It governs the other two empirical values, wealth and passions. It represents largely the Hindu moral ideal. "If *mokṣa* is the pursuit of the Kingdom of God, *dharma* is the pursuit of the Kingdom of God on earth." *Dharma* governs all the details of the social and institutional life of the Hindus, their civil laws, the laws of debt, sureties, etc. *Dharma* is central to Hindu ethical and religious thought. It is that which sustains society. Society falls out, when the hold of *dharma* is lost on it. It is like the Platonic concept of justice. One is asked to follow the path of *dharma* in his own interest. He who follows *dharma* gets in its wake all other goods. The exhortation is Seek ye first *dharma* and all other things will be added unto you. The pragmatic value of *dharma* is expressed in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. Towards the conclusion of the great epic, *Mahābhārata*, the sage cries out, "With uplifted hands, I cry out alas! None listens, through *dharma* one can gain material welfare and gratify his desires as well: then why is it that *dharma* is not resorted to?"

In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Rama stands for this supreme value, *dharma*. He is called the *dharmātma*. Rama on the eve of his banishment exclaims to his brother that human experience makes clear that the pursuit of *dharma* brings in its trial, wealth, pleasures and all else as one who attains all the good things of life from the marriage with a beloved and obedient wife.[10] Rama, the moral hero, in the very next verse deprecates the man who makes wealth or passions the end of life. *Dharma* has to be practised with courage without resorting to casuistry. We get a clear model of the way one should pursue *dharma*, when we read the elaborate plea of Bharata with the able assistance of Jabali and Vasiṣta with his elder brother Rama, asking him to go back to his kingdom. None of the prevarications attracts or deflects Rama's vision. He sticks to the true spirit of *dharma*.

On another occasion Rama asks Lakshmana, "How shall we seek to please the divine who is not within our reach, when we neglect father, mother, and teacher who are with us."[11] The concept of

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[10] *Rāmāyana*, II, 21, 57–58.

[11] *Rāmāyaṇa*, II, 30, 33.

dharma is not a mere transcendent principle. It has two aspects: "It is half divine and half human." Being divine, it demands our obedience to its call, being human, it is subject to change with man's progress. Thanks to the monumental work of M. M. Kane, we find that the concept of *dharma* is not a static compound of precepts set down for all ages, for any defined and undefined eventuality. In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan, "*Dharma* is just like an elastic tissue which clothes our growing body. If it is too tight it will give way, and we shall have lawless anarchy and revolution. If it is too loose it will trip us and impede our movements."

The Hindu concept of *dharma* is flexible and relative to the age, position, vocation and one's stage in life. Though it is relative in relation to others, the duty one has to perform has an absolute claim on him. It is binding. *Dharma* is the law of one's own being. Development of human personality is not possible without the individual discharging his own *dharma* (*svadharma*). The ethical life of man is not the final stage in the growth of one's personality. The fourth value is called *mokṣa*, *i.e.*, salvation or liberation. There are two trans-empirical states of existence described in Hinduism (1) heaven, *svarga*, also called *abhudaya*, (2) *mokṣa* or *nishreyas*. The individual soul reaps the fruits of his acts in paradise and is again sent back to the world of *samsāra*, the moment one's good merit (*punya*) is expended. When we are in heaven or paradise enjoying the fruits of our merit, we experience certain limitations. There is always the feeling that our period of enjoyment is to end, the moment the credit of merit is exhausted. This sword of Damocles is always hanging on us. Further, in heaven, when one soul sees the greater enjoyment of other souls, it is filled with a sense of the contrast of high and low. Owing to such reasons the Hindu theists regard heaven or *svarga* as lower ideal.

Mokṣa is a state of existence filled with bliss and knowledge. It is the realisation, *i.e.*, the first-hand experience of the grace of the Lord (*prasāda*). It is the restoration of the right relation between God and man permanently. As in *svarga*, there is no return here to the world of *samsāra*. Once we attain *mokṣa* there is no return to the world of sorrow or rebirth. *Mokṣa* puts a radical end to our sorrows and sins. Our doubts and disbelief are dispelled. We experience no conflict or strain in our acts. Our words become words of wisdom, our work becomes worship and our conduct becomes devotion and consecration. We say, "I do nothing myself. The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."[12] We become children of God. "Whoever is born of God cannot sin."[13] The soul in *mokṣa* becomes completely

[12] John, VIII, 28 and also *see* XIV: 10.
[13] I John, III: 9.

pure and some of them live the life of perpetual contemplation like the psalmists. We have in the *Gītā* and the *Upanishads* splendid description of the state *mokṣa*. It is a state of utter dedication and total self-surrender. The individual ego loses all its waywardness and slant towards egoism or sin. It becomes a personality. It is a sort of rebornness. We die to our old selves. One sees God in all and not God as all. That is pantheism. God *minus* the world is still God. The Hindu theist affirms the transcendence and also immanence of God. He is the inner ruler immortal (*antaryāmin*). The chief method to attain *mokṣa* is the willing, joyful, complete surrender of the self to the Lord. It is called *sharanāgati*. The great book of the Hindu theists, *Bhāgavata*, speaks in glowing terms about the doctrine of *bhakti*. The Lord protects the soul provided they show a contrite heart and complete faith in him. Self-surrender and steadfast faith in Him are necessary. The Hindu theist feels that the manifest destiny of man is to attain the fellowship of the Lord and to become willing instrument of the Lord's mission. The devotees of the Lord in Hinduism too are of two types: (i) some follow the way of Mary, (ii) others that of Martha. The active devotees go out in the world and passionately carry a crusade to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. The soul in *mokṣa* has the full realisation that all things are directed by God. *Mokṣa* is 'a master-word' in Indian philosophy. The soul sees the work of God in all the activities. T. S. Eliot writes:

> "The wounded surgeon plies the steel
> That questions the distempered part;
> Beneath the bleeding hands we feel
> The sharp compassion of the healer's art
> Resolving the enigma of the fever chart."[14]

The finest expression of this truth is found in the conclusion of Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*, "Thy will be done, even in my undoing".

The concept of *mokṣa* in Hinduism answers two important doubts. The human being is confronted while he lives by the presence of death. The certainty of death fills his heart with fear and on occasions spoils the enjoyment of his life. In the presence of death, if that is the final truth, the human being does not feel any significance in life. The thought of death makes man feel the vast nothingness behind it. The existentialists have brought this problem to the forefront. The concept of *mokṣa* takes away the importance of death. It says with the poet Donne, "Death, thou art dead". Hence the great value of *mokṣa*. It helps the frightened man to overcome the feeling of loneliness and

[14] T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, 10.

the vaster feeling of nothingness beyond death. *Mokṣa* or the concept of salvation answers the shrill cry of man when he is teased and tossed by the thought of his insecurity, conflict, idea of death, division in self. The more intellectual man is, he puts the question of the poet:

> "Oh wearisome condition of humanity !
> Born under one law, to another bound,
> Vainly begot and yet forbidden vanity,
> Created sick commanded to be sound.
> What meaneth Nature by these diverse laws ?
> Passion and reason self-divisions cause."

This agnostic note and sceptical questioning arises from the philosophy of pure naturalism, which is quelled by the concept of *mokṣa*. Man was not made in vain, He was made for God and 'our souls will not rest satisfied till they all reach him." In the words of Augustine, "God is the answer to man's question, Who shall save me from the body of death ?" In the language of the existentialist philosophers, man longs to preserve himself beyond death and at times entertains the doubt whether death will annihilate him into nothingness. The idea of final extinction is unbearable to man. He tries to erect several steps to get over it, forgetting God. Death is the challenge. "Philosophy is meditation on death," according to Plato. *Mokṣa* takes up the challenge and quells the dread of death and the sorrow consequent to the realisation of the transitoriness of life. In human life man experiences several of his limitations, a sense of radical insecurity, a sense of dread and anguish, and a feeling of profound unrest and care. *Mokṣa* is a meaningful deliverance from these fears of facing nothingness beyond death. Further, it is the concept of *mokṣa* that gives meaning to human existence and ties into an unity all the activities of man. Every opportunity is to be guided and regulated by the orientation of *mokṣa*. *Dharma* organises our passions and possessions orienting it towards the direction of *mokṣa*. But for this unifying fact, all the lesser values of man will each erect itself into an end. We will have a paganism and the cult of the rapture of the body. Men will not recognise any other call than those of the body and the glittering mind. In the words of W. B. Yeats, these mystics of body will sink into sloth, "sit at home by the fire and fatten a lazy body". The cultivated among them will not look before and after and pine for what is not. They will, "learn to gather sloes in their season, to sheer sheep, to draw water from the spring with grateful happiness and no longer vex their hearts with impossible longing". Another variety of men will take to a hectic life, getting and spending, they will lay waste their powers. They will not debate about fate or free-will. A few others will have some soft consideration for others and will entertain kindly

feelings for others, except when they are crossed or affected. A cheap conventional vague fellow feeling some will entertain. It will have no roots for it has no basis. They will glibly use the word, 'love', and keep a smart conventional society. In the absence of the unifying concept of *mokṣa* and the presence of death laying all of us flat, life will be insignificant and death will have no consequence. Failure will be unimportant and success means nothing. What transforms the individual into a person is *mokṣa*. It is a new heart. The Lord says, "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put into you." The Hindu theist regards that man's perfect personality is achieved in his loving self-surrender to God. This enables him to effectively live his life achieving social good, *lokasaṅgraha*.

The Hindu view of personality in the purely psychological sense of the term is connected with the concepts of the *triguṇas*, the *sāttvic*, *rājasic* and the *tāmasic*. The *Gītā* describes in great detail the qualities of these types. They can briefly be described as the good, the passionate and the dark. All human beings partake of these inseparable qualities. In some, one element is dominant and the others are recessive. What makes one sāttvic or rājasic or tāmasic is the predominance of one element over the others. Some scholars and Indian psychologists institute a comparison between these types and the three types of temperament, described by W. H. Sheldon in his book, *The Varieties of Temperament*. But the comparison can hold good only within limits. The real personality of man consists in his transcendence of the three *guṇas* in *mokṣa* in loving devotion to God.

A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF SOCIETY

By Shri M. M. Thomas

Christianity is primarily news declared as good news or the gospel. Views of God and man, no doubt, are implied in the gospel. But they are derived. When one is dealing with the secondary level of Christian "views", it is necessary to make clear that they can never be equated with the Christian Truth. And further, since there can be difference as to the views implied in the gospel, I cannot consider myself as indicating *the* Christian view, but only *a* Christian view.

I. The Christian Point of Viewing

The starting-point of any Christian view of man-in-society must be the Christian Truth. And the core of the Christian Truth as I have said is the news of a particular event in history declared as good news because it is the deed of God by which God saves mankind. The event is the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ of Nazareth; and the New Testament and the historical creeds of the Christian Church are one in affirming that in this event, God has acted decisively for human salvation or reconciliation. The Gospel according to St. John says: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life," (Jn. 3.16. RSV). Or as it is given in the Nicene Creed, universally acknowledged by the Churches as expressing the Christian Truth: "I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ....Very God of Very God....Who for us men and for our Salvation came down from heaven. And was made man, And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures...." That is, Jesus Christ is the deed of God in which the love of God and the ultimate destiny of man are both revealed and fulfilled.

St. Paul in one of his letters says: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." A humanity reconciled to God in Jesus Christ. This presupposes that man has been created for fellowship with God but has alienated himself from Him, in such a way that he cannot effect the reconciliation himself. The religious truths of Divine Creation and Human Fall (depicted in the Bible in various pictorial ways) form an essential framework for the Gospel of Reconciliation which in turn authenticates their validity.

I have said so much to indicate the theological starting-point of my paper because the Christian view of man in society is a working out of the implications of Creation, Fall and Redemption for the understanding of society. I have no intention to discuss the truth of this theological framework, I assume it. Here I am not concerned with its relation to a logically coherent philosophy of religion or with its relation to the theology of other religions. These are important but what I am here trying to do is only to indicate what the Christian Truth of Creation, Fall and Redemption may involve for our view of man in society.

II. Some General Insights about Man

From these Christian truths of Creation, Fall and Redemption several general insights about man and his character may be derived; and these insights are relevant to our view of society.

(1) *Man as Finite Personal Being.*—Firstly, man is a finite spiritual being. Not only in his involvement in nature, but even at the height of his spiritual transcendence, according to the Christian view, man is and knows himself to be creature. It means that every man is a finite self aware of its freedom as obligation to acknowledge the sovereignty of God and to revere other finite selves. Man is called to recognize the otherness of God and other people and their claims on him. He is an I which faces the Thou of neighbour bound together by the Thou of God. Life is personal dialogue.

This creaturely selfhood of man is considered by Biblical faith to be a *good* gift of God. In the poem of Creation with which the Bible opens, God declares the world of nature and the world of finite mankind created by Him as "very good" (Gen. 1.31). The Biblical view never equates sin with creaturely finiteness. Creaturely finiteness is the essence of manhood. The Salvation of Christ is reconciliation, putting finite man in right relation with the otherness of God and neighbours. The Church, which is the symbol and prototype of the ultimate goal of divine salvation, is a fellowship or a communion of persons, acknowledging common allegiance to the Kingship of Christ which makes them members one of another. To sum up my first point: by Creation and Redemption man belongs to a community of persons bound together by their acknowledgement of God and His rule which put them also into responsible relation with one another. That determines man's character and destiny.

(2) *Man a Spirit-Nature Unity.*—Secondly, man is a part of nature like other subhuman creatures of God. That is, he is related integrally to the material world and the animal world. But unlike them, man as a spiritual being has the awareness of his involvement in nature and

capacity to transcend nature as a centre of freedom and personal responsibility. Human self therefore cannot be understood except as amphibious—he is related to two worlds, the world of natural functions, and to the world of persons, and the two cannot be divorced in human existence. He is nature-spirit unity. His participation in natural functions is affected by his spirit and his spiritual freedom is conditioned by his participation in natural processes. Neither nature nor spirit has independent existence in man. According to the Christian view, this is the human existence given by God in Creation and Redemption: "The Lord God formed man of dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2.7). Thus the word "soul" is used not for the spiritual part of man but for what today we speak of as person, that is the whole man in his nature-spirit unity. And this is what made death such a tragedy because the Biblical faith could not conceive it except as dissolution of the total human self. And this view of man is so integral to the Christian understanding also that Christianity declares faith in the immortality of man not as the immortality of man's spiritual part but as the resurrection of the body, redeemed of the corruptions introduced by sin. This is almost to say: "Man is a bodily being, and remains so in eternity as well. Bodiliness and human life belong inseparably together" (Bonhoeffer). And this view of man is corroborated by the divine incarnation of Christ who is the Logos of God made Flesh as well as by the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

This spirit-nature unity of man is most evident when we consider society. Take for instance the nature of man-woman relations. The Biblical story of Creation says: "God created man in his own image; In the image of God created He him, male and female created He them. (Gen. 1.27). Sexuality is a natural function in all organic life. This remains so in mankind also. But in man-woman relation, it is also the basis and means of spiritual inter-personal community, expressing their spiritual being, the image of God. So much so, sexual act in human life according to Christianity can never be understood merely as a natural function; it is full of spiritual significance. It is integral to the spiritual being of man and can never be isolated from his personality. In lust it destroys personality; in love it fulfils it. The animals do not associate sex with lust or love. Both lust and love are produced by sex taken hold of by the spirit of man. What is true of sex is true of man's hunger for food which leads to economic life, or the need for organised life which is politics. Society as an organisation of natural functions and society as community of persons are so intertwined and interdependent that it is impossible to say where nature ends and spirit begins.

Society is part of the world of nature and may be considered as organisation and planning of functions. But *in* every such organisation, not only *after* it, recognition should be given to man as a personal being destined to communion with God and community with neighbour. "The sabbath is made for man and not man for the sabbath," said Jesus. This is true of all social institutions, planning of social welfare and functional organisations.

It is this character of man-in-society as a spirit-nature unity which makes a purely naturalistic or a purely spiritualistic interpretation of human society and history impossible.

(3) *Man's Creaturely Creativeness.*—Spriritual freedom is always power to create. Hence man has creative power. Since he is a creature, his power is not to create out of nothing, which is God's power as Creator, but to co-operate with God and create out of the raw material of nature provided by God. There are two levels at which human creativity finds expression. (1) In the exploitation and conquest of subhuman nature. The Biblical story of Creation speaks of God's command to man to "replenish the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moved upon the earth" (Gen. 1.28). The Psalmist asks the question: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained: what is man that thou art mindful of him?" And he answers the question himself by saying: "Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things under his feet" (Ps. 8.3–6.) And the New Testament sees in the resurrection of Jesus Christ a guarantee of the final conquest of man over nature (Heb. 2.8–9). This is important to emphasise in this age of science and technology. They are expressions of creativeness of man ordained by the Creator and guaranteed in Christ's Redemption. (2) A second aspect of human creativity is man's ability and responsibility to re-form the structures of society and create new social institutions and values. There no doubt exist certain basic moral norms given in Creation. For instance, there is an essential moral structure of marriage and family, without which marriage and family cease to fulfil their purposes ordained by God. But there is a tendency especially among religious people to equate the forms of rural society with the divine law, and to develop a static conception of the law of social nature as given by God. The point I am making is that man's transcendence over the structures of society make restructuring of social institutions a moral responsibility given to him by God. Social *dharma* or justice is a dynamic ever-growing concept because of the creativeness of human freedom. This again,

it is important to recognise at this time of cultural renaissance and social revolution. They are justified not only when they are in the name of a revival of or return to the moral law, but also when they are in the name of man's spiritual right to creativity.

(4) *Sin as Spiritual Rebellion against Finiteness.*—Man as finite self makes him a personal being destined for community, makes his participation in the organisation of social functions as expression of his being in community and gives him power to conquer the sub-human nature and create new patterns and values of social organisation. But the tragedy of man is the same finite freedom of man's spiritual selfhood which is the source of such goodness is also the source of sin.

Sin, as I said before, is not creaturely finiteness. On the contrary, it is man's spiritual unwillingness to accept his creaturely finiteness as coming under the loving purpose of God. The "original" or the fundamental sin of man is the refusal of his spirit to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Creator and to recognise his dependence on Him; in other words, sin is the worship of the self rather than God. This is pictorially presented in the Genesis story of the Fall (Gen. 3). This is what St. Paul speaks of as idolatry, that is the worship of the creature rather than the Creator, the self turning away from acknowledgement of its accountability to God as the ultimate source and goal of its freedom to affirm that his self is a law unto itself. Sin is primarily a fall in the spirit of man at the very point where he becomes aware of the freedom of his selfhood and its transcendence.

This spiritual alienation from God brings about self-alienation. Sinful man is spiritually aware that his creaturehood and dependence on God are an inescapable fact and knows that he is affronting reality by seeking to become independent of God. This brings about self-alienation—the contradiction between the essence of the self which is finite and the existence of the self which seeks to overcome finiteness. He seeks to give a sense of reality to his delusion of infinite selfhood by several means. First, he seeks to play god to his neighbour. Instead of reverence for the mystery and otherness of people, he seeks to use them and exploit them and makes them mere projections of his self. They refuse to submit and hence he becomes alienated from neighbours who are seen as his enemies. Secondly, he separates spirit and nature and chooses to pursue pure spirit (pietism) or try total immersion in nature (sensualism). He sees in the organisation and enjoyment of sex, hunger and power his great self-defence and makes them his ultimate end and reverses the idea of means and ends by subordinating persons to functions. And thirdly, he uses his mastery over nature and his capacity to create new structures and values of society to

assert that man is the maker of the universe and the master of his destiny. Thus his relation to nature gets perverted. Fourthly, he creates his own gods. The aim is by some means to escape his finitehood.

There are four points I want to emphasise here. (1) Sin begins in the spirit of man at the point of man's self-transcendence and awareness of God. (2) Beginning with the spirit, sin affects the total self and its relation to God, neighbour and nature. (3) Sin does not mean absence of goodness. "Everything created by God is good" and remains so. But infected by the spirit of human self-sufficiency, it gets perverse and disintegrated, serving false purposes.

This last point requires a little more explanation. The alienation of self from God and the search for spiritual self-sufficiency need not always express themselves as crude selfishness. In the final result it does, but not necessarily in the beginning. Christianity has given special attention to man's search for self-righteousness or moral self-justification of oneself before oneself and God by means of religion, morality and good works, what St. Paul calls the works of the law, and Christianity sees in it the manifestation of man's self, alienated from God and turned in on itself. In fact, Christ's condemnation of the moral pharisee was that he used his allegiance to and practice of the moral law to justify himself before himself and to separate himself from God and his neighbour the publican. In the story of Jesus where a pharisee and a publican went to pray, the pharisee prayed to himself than to God that he was not as immoral as his neighbour, the publican, went home justifying himself, and not meeting either God or his neighbour. One of the things we are learning from the psychological and social sciences today is that man goes to any length to justify what he is and what he does, not merely before other people, but before himself and his own accusing moral conscience. The endless struggle for self-justification, they say, creates a pathological condition both for individuals and groups. And it is precisely where there is moral crusading and ideological fanaticism, good works and religious devotion that man may be serving self most by seeking a self-righteousness, a self-justification without God. The self turned on itself can use knowledge, moral idealism and religion as "ideologies", to justify existence of the self, alienated from God and neighbour.

In fact, sin or alienation from God creates a vicious circle from which human self cannot extricate itself and hence the need for divine initiative and the deed of reconciliation in which God accepts the sinner without his having to justify himself and releases him from the endless and ever-frustrating struggle for self-justification, for true service of God and man.

The point I like to make is that, according to the Christian view, self-centredness, whether of the naked or the more subtle kind, must be considered as universally and permanently operating in society and in all men, including those who have tasted the first fruits of Christ's redemption. Therefore, God apart from acting in Jesus Christ to save (which depends for its effectiveness on man's voluntary response and the measure of that response), also acts in and through institutions and structures of society to control the social evils resulting from sin by punishing the evil and promoting the good. The controlling functions of society and state are ordained by God to preserve society from chaos and tyranny to bring to men the framework for a fuller human life and to provide room for the saving work of God. Here we see the necessity not only for *lokniti* but also *rajniti*. But of course, the controlling centres ordained by God are themselves part of the spiritual humanity involved in collective self-centredness and collective self-justification; they are themselves prone to be laws to themselves and create tyranny and chaos and therefore need control by built-in checks and balances.

On the one hand, there is here a social realism which avoids a Utopianism which is often based on the understanding that self-seeking is some sort of historical accident, and can be overcome by more knowledge, scientific planning, ideals or religion or by the elimination of one class or authority. The Crucifiction of Christ reveals that self-seeking is related to the spiritual being of man and therefore is tougher than a natural disorder or an organic disease. On the other hand, the Resurrection of Christ guarantees the Christian hope of a final consummation of the purpose of God for society and it saves Christian social realism from falling into cynicism or defeatism in working for justice in society and state.

III. Meaning of Social Justice

I have dealt with the implications of the Christian view of man as created, fallen and redeemed and have indicated (rather too briefly and perhaps not sufficiently clearly) certain implications of the same for our view of society. I would however like to close my paper with a discussion of the meaning of social justice, that is to say, the goal of organised society.

(1) *Community of Love and its Implications for Social Justice.*— The first thing to say is that community of persons which I have indicated as the ultimate dimension of society is the result of a divine gift of Reconciliation, leading to mutual reconciliation and cannot be an ideal to be realised by social organisation. It is the realm of voluntary responses.

I may illustrate from the Church which in its essence is the prototype of a community of persons. Its basis is forgiving love or *agape*, the New Testament word for the love which reconciles men to God and to one another in Christ. "Forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony." (Col. 3. 13–14). "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son unto the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation of our sins. Beloved, as God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 Jn. 4·9–11). Men bound together by the forgiving love of God in Christ and therefore forgiving one another. And the New Testament explicitly states that it is a community which transcends all natural and historical divisions in society. "In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus " (Gal. 3. 26–28).

The Fellowship of the Church is not the only foretaste of personal community possible. The highest reaches of friendship, reverence for personality and forgiving love open to all men in general secular society are all pointers towards it. The Fellowship in Jesus Christ, for the Christian, however, is the revelation of what constitutes personal community wherever it exists, and the guarantee of its validity wherever it exists. That is to say, the constitution of community in secular society is analogous to the constitution of the Christian Fellowship. We may point to several aspects of this constitution. It is based on the belief: (1) that man is not only a means but also an end in himself and has dignity as a person beyond any consideration of social utility; and at this personal level men are equal; (2) that men are bound together by a Truth transcending society which puts them into a relation of responsibility to each other in society; (3) Man is a mystery in his freedom, and knowledge of one another is through a meeting of one another in reverence, trust and love.

I have digressed a bit. The idea, I hope, is clear. The ultimate goal of society, namely personal community or fellowship whether in Christian or secular experience lies in the realm of the freedom of the spirit, and its voluntary responses. It is never produced by organisation. Love cannot be commanded to appear.

However, the fact that personal community is the ultimate fulfilment of society does mean that social organisation should develop and preserve a social, economic and political framework which recognises the dignity of the individual man above utilitarian considerations

and give freedom for the life of the spirit. Let me spell out two or three implications of this for social justice. (*a*) Firstly, it is a test of social justice whether organised centres of social and political life have a real concern for those men whose utility for society and whose power or status in society are nil, that is, the "poor" and the "least" of New Testament definition. (*b*) Secondly, it is necessary for social justice that organised society negatively acknowledge that man's ultimate destiny is outside its field and give to every man the fundamental rights of personal being. That is to say, society and state should be so organised that men as persons can without social hindrance pursue their ends in the religious, cultural and intellectual realms and that it will provide the social support and material means to sustain them in the pursuit even when they do not conform. (*c*) Society should keep open personal communication across social divisions, whether family, tribe, caste, race, class or creed. Negatively it means that there should not be any social segregation or discrimination (legal or illegal) which prevents a real responsible meeting of persons on the basis of personal equality. But positively it involves the development of social mobility based on decentralisation and social pluralism. Personal freedom and common humanity can find its best social basis when one man can participate in a number of different small societies founded for different social interests, purposes, and not be rigidly controlled by one social organisation which meets all his social purposes. And new principles of social organisation emphasising common humanity should be stressed. For instance, local neighbourhood in many areas makes possible a framework of common interests for people of different sorts to know each other in a community of shared responsibility.

(2) *Justice in Social Institutions.*—There are a great many areas of social life which come directly within the scope of organisation and planning which require that men must be seen in terms of their different functions, rather than in their common humanity. In the institution of marriage and family we are dealing with the organisation of male and female, and parents and children; in education, it is teacher and the taught; in the economic order, society deals with citizen, voter, legislator, executive, judge, etc. In these areas of social life, men are related to each other as means to common ends within a network of duties and rights. What is the Christian approach to define social justice in this field. I make three short statements, some of them repetitions of points already made elsewhere.

(i) Family, economic order, government, etc., are ordained by God and therefore have each its own special purpose and a fundamental structure to fulfil it. Therefore both the purpose and the structure have a moral foundation. (Every sphere of social organisation is

thus responsible to the divine law of its own true being; it cannot be a law unto itself. But it is a "secular" sphere in the sense that it has its relative autonomy from organised religion, which however has the duty ever to remind the secular spheres of the law and love of God.)

(ii) The essential structure of any social institution involves loci of authority as means of discipline necessary for its responsible functioning and an order of duties and rights relating differences of status to differences of function for the common good. But they are set within a regulating framework of freedom and equality, also built into the life of the institution itself. Justice depends on maintaining a right balance of order, freedom and equality under the common good.

(iii) Since man in his total structure is spirit-nature unity, all structures of social institutions are dynamic in character. For the three reasons I have already stated: (*a*) All moral laws of society open towards and are fulfilled by the law of love which therefore stands as criterion of all laws. It is a moral responsibility that justice should be continually redefined in the light of the law of love. (*b*) Man's growing mastery over the material and organic worlds radically changes the framework within which the divine purposes of social institutions have to be fulfilled. Therefore their forms need change. For instance, change from the rural agricultural to the industrial urban society requires very radical changes in the re-definition of justice. (*c*) The perversity of sin sets conflicts within the institutions between essential moral purposes of order, freedom and equality and between means and ends as well as between institutions and their relation to society as a whole. These place limits to the possible in society and will require the pursuit of a goal of relative and partial justice in a historical situation, because it is the best possible approximation to justice in it.

Since concrete application to the Indian situation is outside the scope of this paper, I end with these rather abstract reflections on a Christian view of society.

THE NATURE AND DESTINY OF MAN
(from the Hindu point of view)

By Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan

According to Hinduism, a distinction is made between an *āstika* and a *nāstika*. *Asti* means 'exists' and *nāsti* means 'does not exist'. An *āstika* believes in the existence of certain things. They are (1) the *Vedas*, their eternality and their infallibility. (2) *Īśvara* or God, (3) the *Ātman*, the inner self of every man, (4) *Karma* or the law of spiritual causation and (5) *punarjanma* or rebirth, *i.e.*, being subject to the recurrent cycle of birth and death. Apart from the *Vedas* which are the source book of Hindu religion, the other four, namely *Īśvara*, *Ātma*, *Karma* and *Punarjanma* contain in themselves the substance of the nature and destiny of man from the Hindu point of view.

Every human being, says Western psychology, is a body and mind in one. The body is said to be the corporeal part while the mind is the incorporeal part. According to Hinduism, the physical part of man is not confined to his body of bones, muscles, nerves, flesh and blood. This part of man is his gross body or *sthūla śarīra*. It is what is consciously operative in the life of man in his waking moments and otherwise and is the visible part of his being. Behind the gross body and analogous to it in function is the subtle body or the *sūkshma śarīra* which is active in dream states and which carries the consciousness of the dreamer to distant places while his gross body lies extended on its bed. The *sūkshma śarīra* survives for a time the liquidation of the physical body by death. It is also subject to joys and sorrows, to thirst and hunger and 'enjoys' in ethereal regions the benefits and penalties of the good and evil deeds done before death. A third kind of body is the causal body or the *kārana śarīra* which carries the residual propensities or *samskāras* of a previous birth and determines the character of the next birth.

It will be seen that this account of man is bound up with the twin concepts of *karma* and *punarjanma*. The belief in these two concepts is cardinal to Hinduism. The *Kathopanishad* says: *Sasyamiva martyah pachyate. Sasyamiva ājāyate punaḥ.* Like corn man ripens unto death, like corn he is born again. *Punarapi jananam, punarapi maraṇam*, the alternation of birth and death determined by the effects of the ethical actions performed in each birth is not merely a postulate of Hindu religion, but proved by a number of considerations not the least of them being the inequalities of human endowment and fortune. On

no other hypothesis can we explain the sufferings of the good and the prosperity of the wicked. When Jesus asked: 'Who has sinned that this man was born blind—he or his father?", the reply according to Hinduism is: 'He did not sin, but it was his father'. But the 'father' in this case was the man himself in his previous birth who, by his *karmas*, was the progenitor of the man in this birth. Hence, the nature of man as he is at present constituted is to be subject to the recurrent cycle of birth and death which, in the language of Hinduism, is called *samsāra*. The three kinds of *śarīra*, the *kārana*, the *sūkshma* and the *sthūla* are intimately bound up with this metempsychosis.

The ultimate objective of every earnest Hindu is to put an end to this cycle in his person. It is not possible to determine when it began, *i.e.*, when man was first born. The question of man's 'first birth' is both purposeless and unanswerable. Birth being an effect of an antecedent causal determinant in the shape of *karma*, which, in turn, implies a doer in a still earlier birth, the only answer to this is that there can be no 'first birth' in the understandable sense of that expression. Therefore, *samsāra*, by which is meant the alternation of birth and death, is *anādi*, without a beginning. But though it had no beginning, it can have an end. That will be when man attains salvation. Salvation is literally being saved from death. Man is called a *martya*, one who is liable to die. His desire, his hope and his endeavour are that he may attain *amrtatva* or immorality, '*mrtyor mā amrtam gamaya*' lead me from death to Immortality, is an ancient Vedic prayer. The actions of the present birth should be directed to the extinction of future births. We are born now so that we may not be born again.

The immortality that is sought is not physical immortality; for that is impossible seeing that the corporeal body must decay and perish. 'Dust to dust and ashes to ashes' was spoken of the *sthūla śarīra*. Nor is it personal immortality relating to the *sūkshma* and the *kārana śarīras* as they too are perishable by nature. The gross, the subtle and the causal parts of man are subject to *shadvikāras* or six-fold transformations of birth, existence, growth, change, decline and death. What is immortal could not have been born. For, if it is born at a particular moment, it means it *was not* prior to it, and so eternality which is the same as immortality cannot be predicated of it. Everything that is born must die (*jātasya dhruvo mrtyuhu*). So, to be undying and immortal, a thing must be unborn. The unborn is the ever-existent. That which exists for ever can have neither birth nor death.

Everything that is empirical in man, all that is material and elemental, in whatever shape or form, has had a birth and death. These

things occur in time; but, they do not endure beyond time. The *kārana*, the *sūkshma* and the *sthūla śarīras* are adventitious to the inmost nature of man which is the basic man, his self, what he is deep down in his being, his very core which knows neither birth nor death. That is the *Ātman*. That is what a man *is*, essentially, in himself. All else about him, all else of him are not his self; they are not *he*. The three *śarīrās* above referred to come and go and are not the enduring *he*. His body, his organs, his mind, his intellect, even his ego-sense by which he refers to himself as *I*, none of these is *he*. A rigorous and uncompromising analysis of one's nature will show that whatever can be referred to by the word *my* is not *I*. *My* mind, *my* intellect, *my* ego, these are as much foreign to me and will not make my *I* as *my* body, *my* wife and children, *my* property, *my* country, etc. So, the ego, the mind and the intellect too are to be classified under the *not-I* or the *anātman*, what is *not* the *ātman*.

The true nature of man is different from whatever comes under the head of the *anātman*. Our empirical life, our acts and relations, the joys and sorrows consequent on them, the residuary propensities and impressions which they produce leading to the continuance of the *sāmsāric* cycle are all bound up with *anātman*. The character of our empirical self is the result of the *anātman* clouding the *ātman* and preventing it from shining in its own native light. Every birth is a new entanglement of the *ātman* in the meshes of the *anātman*. Salvation or *mōksha* is the liberation of the *ātman* from this entanglement.

If what a man *is* ultimately, *i.e.*, his real self is the *ātman*,—what is its nature? Hindu philosophy speaks of it as *chit*, the illumining consciousness by which all empirical experience becomes possible. It illumines because it is luminous. The *Upanishad* declares that it is that by which the eye sees, but which does not see with the eye; it is that by which the ear hears, but does not hear with the ear; it is that by which the mind thinks, but does not think with a mind. It is the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind. Not being constituted of matter, the *ātman* is not subject to the *shadvikāras* and so it is undying. Because it is undying, it is unborn since death and birth imply each other. The *Upanishad* speaks of it as *ajō nityassāsvatôyam purānaḥ*, the unborn, the eternal, the permanent and the ancient. In truth, man is not what he appears to be *in* his body, or *as* his body. His is not the *deha* or the body. He is the *dehī*, the possessor of the body, that which has taken the body. *Dehas* differ in successive births. But the *dehī* is one and the same. Death means that a particular body has been cast off, that it has fallen away. It is *tanutyāga* or *śarīrapatana*.

Every man is this *chit* in essence. That is his *ātman*, his fundamental and foundational nature. Studying man as he is now to himself

and to others, we find that, oblivious of his true nature, he considers himself to be his body and its physical constituents. Among the latter, the mind and its variations also are included. This wrong identification plunges him into the welter of worldly life and all that it means perpetuating the *sāmsāric* cycle. If, by appropriate prescribed disciplines, he detaches himself from the things to which he wrongly attached himself, then it will dawn on him that he is not what he imagines himself to be, and that the real *I* is the residue after every *my* has been thought away.

But what caused this wrong identification? It arose from a failure to discriminate between the things that are really different. Failure to discriminate is the result of ignorance of a special kind, namely, *avidyā* or wrong apprehension, whereby a thing is mistaken for what it is not. It is apprehension of a thing in what is not that thing (*atasmin tatbuddhih*). The things that belong to the group of the *anātman* are mistaken for the *ātman* and the series of wrong attachments and actions with disastrous consequences is set going. The consciousness of the empirical springing from *avidyā* produces various desires or *kāma* which in their turn lead to actions or *karma* which bind the individual to *samsāra*. These *avidyā*, *kāma* and *karma* are without a beginning. They are *anādi*. As the causes of beginningless birth, they too must be without a beginning. They are responsible for the empirical flux and flow. To stop and reverse the procession of *samsāra*, one must acquire knowledge of one's nature by *ātmavichāra*, by which he will realise that he is the unattached *ātman*, the pure *chit*.

The empirical man is imperfect in knowledge, power and goodness. He is finite in these respects. This finitude is not the result of his sin. He sins because he is finite, *i.e.*, due to his finitising consciousness, by which unaware of his true nature as the pure, eternal, infinite *chit*, he wrongly identifies himself with what he is not. Man falls from his high estate and sins because he forgets his true nature. Realisation of that by knowledge will restore him from the fall. Really, man is not the empirical man. He is not a *martya*. It is his body (with all that is adjunct to it) that is *martya*. In essence, he is the child of immortality, *amrtasya putraḥ*. The *Kathōpanishad* says: "The sense-organs were created to function outward. So, man does not generally perceive the *ātman* that is within. But the brave and disciplined person turning his eye inward sees the inner *ātman*". To perceive it is to realise it as one's true nature. When that realisation arises, one gets automatically freed from the empirical consciousness. "All knots of the heart get broken, all doubts are dispelled and all *karmas* get extinguished". The *Upanishad* adds: "Such *dhīras*, the brave and steadfast ones knowing this (*i.e.*, realising this), which is *amrta* (undying), no more seek the eternal amidst the transient".

This *chit* or illumining consciousness which every man truly is, does not appear externally to others or even to the man himself. Due to beginningless *avidyā*, *kāma* and *karma*, it is thickly laid over with limitations or *upādhis* which conceal it and project themselves as if, they, in their combination, were the real man. These *upādhis* are the ego or the *antahkarana*, the intellect or the *buddhi*, the mind of the *manas*, the organs of apprehension or the *jñānēndriyas* and the organs or action or the *karmēndriyas*. These together are the *person* that psychology speaks of and separate and distinguish one man from another. They invest him with a delimited consciousness of his self as against that of others, with the sense of the I and the Mine, *ahankāra* and *mamakāra* and with feelings and emotions which constitute his individual character.

Not only is a man a *chit* in essence, but each apparently particular *chit* of every man is non-different from the universal *Chit* which is Reality with a capital R. Lights are of various kinds and forms. We have the oil lamp, the electric light, the light of the glowing embers and the light of the moon, the sun and the stars. They are all different, each from every other. They differ in the quality and in the intensity of the particular lights. Yet, *qua* luminous bodies, they are all one and non-different from each other and from the Supreme Light, the *jyōtishām jyōtis*. It is universal luminosity that is variously embodied in each one of the shining objects. Likewise, the *Chit* of any individual person is non-different alike from the universal *Chit* and from that of every other person. The agencies confining the universal chit in separate bodies make them *appear* different from one another in their several embodiments giving to each its distinguishing form and distinct name. But, back of the *upādhis*, the *chit* of any one is non-different from that of any other and from the universal *Chit*. Every man therefore, essentially as *chit*, is not merely a chip of the old block, but he is the Old Block itself. Every *jivātman* is only the *Paramātman* crabbed and confined within the limiting adjuncts. This is the import of the *Upanishadic* declarations: *prajñānam Brahma:* the Brahman is of the nature of luminous consciousness, *tattvamasi:* thou, the individual, art That, the Universal, and, *aham Brahmāsmi* ; I (freed from the constraint of the *upādhis*) am Brahman (which no *upādhis* can touch).

The empirical *I* is so much with us, waking, sleeping and dreaming that few are able to rise to a consciousness of the transcendental *I*. That is given only to those whom the *Upanishad* calls *dhīras*, who possess the *āvrttachakshus*, whose eye is turned inward. To the generality of us who confound the *ātman* with the body and its adjuncts, the empirical *I* is the real thing while the true *ātman* appears fictitious. This has been beautifully brought out by that brilliant writer, Thoreau in his *Walden* under the Chapter, *What I lived For*. Says Thoreau:

"Shams and delusions are esteemed the soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and Arabian Nights' Entertainments. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence, that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere, which still is built on purely illusory foundations. I have read it in a Hindoo book that there was a king's son, who being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester, and growing up to maturity in that state, imagined himself to belong to the barbarous race within which he lived. One of his father's ministers discovered him, revealed to him what he was, and the misconception of his character was removed and he knew himself to be a prince. So, the soul, continues the Hindoo philosopher, from the circumstances in which it is placed, mistakes its own character, until the truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and then it knows itself to be Brahme (sic)".

All this is from the point of view of Advaita Vedanta. According to Visiṣṭādvaita, the empirical world is constituted of *chit* and *achit*, the intelligent and the non-intelligent. Man comes under the category of the *chit*. Every man is a body and soul in one. The soul is in the body and possesses it. The body belongs to the soul in an organic relation. It is a living and functioning entity only by virtue of so belonging to the soul. Apart from it, it cannot live. Separation from the soul is death to the body. The body is the *śarīra* and the soul is the *śarīri*. The relation between them is known as the *śarīra-śarīri sambandha*. Even so, Man and Nature constitute the body of God. God is the Soul, the *sarīri* and *chit* that is Man and *achit* that is Nature are His body. They belong to Him as His body. Man's true nature consists in this *belonging*. In the same way as the soul makes the body function in the human person, does God activate man that is His body, permeating him through and through. God is his *antaryāmin*, who rules him from within (*antah yamayati*). Man lives, moves and has his being in God. His nature is to live in perpetual dependence on God as the *sēsha* and God is the *seshi*. Man's true nature is to be a part of God. It is a case of organismal oneness with God. Oblivious of this, man lives as if he is, not a *part* of God, but *apart* from God and that is the cause of his affliction in *samsāra* and all that it connotes. To get over it, he must re-unite with God, by becoming aware that he belongs to God as His body.

He must seek God with all his heart and soul. He must long to belong to God, to possess God and to be possessed by God. He then becomes one with God in form and feature and lives in God's world basking in the bliss of God's presence.

Dvaita Vedanta looks upon man as distinct from God. Man *is not* God, he is not even *of* God; but, he is *for* God. His true nature is to be a servant of God worshipping Him by his consecrated service and devotion. The ills of his life are to be traced to his 'revolt' from God, to his forgetting his true office as God's *bhrtya* (servant).

The tragedy of human life, according to all schools of Vedanta, arises from man's forgetfulness of his true nature and from his considering himself as separate from God in whatever way that separation may be conceived. Man's duty is to recapture in his mind, heart and soul his oneness with God, to go back to God from whom he has been sundered. To lead man back from the finitude that he has wrongly imposed on himself, to the Infinite that he *is* essentially and *must be* eventually is the office of religion. That is the significance of the Vedic prayer: *asatō mā sadgamaya, tamasō mā jyōtirgamaya, mrtyōr mā amrtamgamaya*. Lead me from falsehood to Truth; lead me from darkness to Light, lead me from death to Immortality. Conditioned by the limiting *upādhis*, subject to the sway of *kāma* and *karma*, man is not able to turn his eye within and realise his nature as the True, the Resplendent and the Immortal Substance of which he, as this particular man, is but the shadow. The *amrtasya putraḥ*, the child of Immortality must come by his inheritance to attain which is both his inalienable right and his appointed destiny. Religion means the process of binding together again what has been sundered. By a misfortune which it is not now possible to say when it happened or how, the Universal Consciousness has got delimited into finite centres of individual men and each of them who is the Brahman in essence has now come to be a mere *jīva*. As such *jīva*, man is subject to the cycle of birth and death. Imprisoned in *samsara*, chained to this cycle and deluded by the superficial attractiveness of the things of the flesh, he has come through a succession of his lives, to be fascinated by the entanglements which he looks upon as his proud embellishments. Dazzled by the moon-day brightness of the earthly pleasures, he forgets that they will soon fail and fade. Reflection must teach him that worldly joys are neither pure nor lasting. He will then yearn for a bliss that is not tainted by sorrow and will not stale in quality or diminish in quantity. That is bliss everlasting, the supreme *ānandam*. The empirical man is the divided man, divided from the Whole which he is or to which he belongs. *Existentially*, he may appear separate from it, but, *essentially*, he is one with It. When he realises that Whole, the *bhūma* that he *is* as against the partial and

the small, the *alpam* that he *appears to be*, in that plenal experience of the fulness of the Whole, there is nothing that he lacks. Sorrow springs from unsatisfied want. Where there is no want, which is the state of one who has realised the All, who is the All, there can be no sorrow. It is a bliss of excellent quality and abundant quantity, a state which is *ānandamaya*. The *alpam* is *martyam*; the *bhūma* is *amrtam*.

The destiny of man is to attain this *ānanda*. To this end, he has to shed his empirical nature, divest himself all his limitations, shake off the shackles that bind him to the world of sensibility and by the practise of the prescribed *sādhanas*, educate himself to the consciousness of his true nature. Fortunately, he is not without aid in this process. The holy books declare to him what he really is. Receiving that instruction with faith and fervour from his *guru* to whom he supplicates with due devotion and earnestness, looking upon him as God Himself and by revolving this instructions in his mind, he converts it into an illumination till, aglow with it, he is enveloped by it.

This pathway to perfection is known as the way of knowledge for *jñānamārga*. It cannot be adopted by everybody or at one bound. It requires an intellectual ripeness of uncommon kind which only few can achieve. Sri Krishna declared '*bahūnām janmanām antē jñānavān mām prapadyate*'. 'One becomes a *jñāni* and attains Me only after innumerable births.' These dispositions, mental and physical, which have clung to the *ātman* are so prolific and stick so deep and thick that a lot of cleansing by virtue and piety running through many lives is necessary before the light of *jñāna* can penetrate and reveal the soul within. He who, by the fructification of *jñāna*, can know and feel that Vasudeva is All is a rare person.

But the average man has no cause to despair. The Supreme Truth is embodied as a personal God Who is the concrete expression of the highest Principle of Reality. God is the eternal incarnation of the Absolute. He is the expression of the Infinite and holds commerce with man who, detaching himself from the allurements of the world, surrenders himself to God invoking His grace and His aid to be taken back to the Whole from which he feels sundered. Dedicating himself and all that he does, both the act and its fruit, to God attuning his heart to Him in love and longing, by the pursuit of the way of devotion, man makes himself eligible for the grace of God which confers on him, in the language of religion, the plenal experience of mystic union with the Divine, or, in the language of philosophy, restores to him the unitary consciousness which was submerged by the supervening encrustations which made for his finiteness. Then the primordial Source of man's being becomes his Sanctuary. All marks of his imperfection disappear, all his finitude vanishes in the effulgence of the Infinite. Dying in the

flesh, he lives for ever in the Spirit. Death itself being dead, there is for him no dying then. " 'Son of Kunti', said Krishna, 'proclaim to the world My devotee never dies'." '*Kaunteya, pratijānihi, na me bhaktah praṇaśyati.*' The Vedantic view of man prescribes a way for the home-coming of man. Man then rests forever in the haven from which there is no going back. The prodigal has returned. The son has become one with the Father. Man ceases to be man and has become God. The mortal has become the Immortal.

Before I close, let me deal with the question of how this Hindu view of the nature and destiny of man influences, or shall I say, should influence his daily life and conduct. It is a truism that no man is happy in his present condition and when he reflects about it, he is frequently at war with himself and his environment. Accumulation of earthly goods does not satisfy the hunger of his soul. It does not even satisfy the hunger of his body, for, it grows by what it feeds on. Man never is, but always, to be blessed. This discontent of man with his present lot may easily lead to a mood of pessimism which may end in uprooting life itself. That will make life poor, nasty, brutish and short. The seemingly 'unmerited' sufferings that one is subject to in the world, the sight of virtue going under and of the triumph of vice, the denial of reward to desert are calculated to make life sour, profitless and stale. It would appear that man has yet to learn the art of living in peace with fellow-men. The mental weapons of war, greed, hatred, jealousy and animosity are sharper and more deadly than the physical ones that human ingenuity can devise. They come back to their wielder like a boomerang making him more wretched than ever before. In this predicament, it behoves the more thoughtful among us to find a remedy for these ills to restore man both as an individual and as a community to mental health which will make for joy and peace. It is in this context that Hindu philosophy and religion, like every other worthwhile philosophy and true religion proclaims the supremacy of the Spirit over Matter and counsels man to establish the sovereignty of the soul in the place of his servility to the senses. The boy Nachiketas in the *Upanishad* story standing before Yama asked to be vouchsafed the knowledge of the soul, whether it survives the body or not, and would not be tempted from his high resolve by the offer of unending days and unsatiating pleasures of richest hue not within the reach of ordinary men. Turning his face against these seductions, he gave them back to Yama himself and, in effect, answered in the language of Christ: 'What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, but loseth his soul?' Neither length of years nor undiminishing wealth can make a man really happy. Maitreyī, wife of Yājñavalkya, spoke to her lord in the same way when he offered to divide his worldly goods between her and his first wife Kātyāyanī

on the eve of his becoming a *Sannyāsin.* She asked her husband: 'If all the wealth of the world were at my feet, would I become immortal by it?' *Yannu mā iyam bhôgāh sarvā prthvī vittēna pūrṇā syāt katham-tenamrtā syām*? '*Nētihōvācha Yājñavalkyaḥ.* No, said Yājñavalkya. *Yathaivopakaranavatām jīvitam tathaiva te jīvitam syāt.* All those riches will be useful for your livelihood,' not for 'life', for wealth destroys immortality. '*Āmrtatvasya nāśāsti vittena*'. Maitreyī replied, 'Of what use is wealth to me if I cannot attain immortality? Teach me, O Lord, the knowledge which makes for immortality.' It is only by renouncing that one can enjoy. *Tena tyaktēna bhunjītāḥ; tyāgēnaikēna amrtatvam ānasuh.* Only by giving up (the earthly goods) can one attain the heavenly Good. And so, the first step in the pilgrim's progress must be detachment from and renunciation of the wealth of the world which is fraught with sorrow in its getting, in its keeping and in its loss. One must develop in oneself a sense of values and estimate each particular thing that he would seek in terms of its contribution to the *summum bonum* of his life. It is worth while to ask about a thing that a man wants, in the language of Maitreyī, *katham tēnamr-tāsyām*? Will it be a means, directly or indirectly, to my immortality?

In this craze to possess material goods more and more, man has got possessed by them. Mankind has now come to be divided by an agent which does not admit of being possessed by two persons in the same sense. It underlines our empirical differences perpetuating them so much that men have ceased to be *fellowmen* to each other. Every man is an *other* to me, not *another* centre in which the Infinite expresses itself as it does in me. Men may sit together physically in the council halls of the world, but they will not come together unless they understand the Vedantic truth even if they do not realise it, that they are rays of the same divine effulgence, that each nation, each individual is nondifferent from every other in essence, that none of them can exist in separation, but that their very life depends on their membership of the body of God which includes the entire universe. The sense of duality begets opposition. Where there is opposition, there is fear. *Dvaitādvaitabhāyam bhavati.* The only remedy for the conflicts of the world, be it in the private or in the public sector, is the cultivation of *advaitahhāva*, the attitude of non-duality, to learn to realise one's own *ātman* and to see that every other man is an expression of the same *ātman. Ātmavat sarvabhūtāni yahpaśyati sapaśyati*, "He sees who sees all things as himself, in his self." As each man's self is dear to him, so will every other man be dear unto him if he sees him as his own self.

But this consummation devoutly to be wished is not easy. Superlatively good and desirable as it is, it requires high resolve and great

endeavour. Every detail of a man's life must be oriented to the spiritual. He must live his days in a spirit of dedication, offering whatever he does to his God. *Yatkarōshi yadasnāsi yagjuhōshi dadāsiyat, yattapasyasi kauntēya tatkurushva madarpaṇam.* " Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice, whatever you give and whatever austerities you adopt, do all that dedicating to Me." Since no normal man will offer to the Lord anything except the best possible for him, one bearing this command in mind will never permit anything that is low, despicable or sordid to enter into any aspect of his life. Every action that he performs from birth to death will be done in that spirit of dedication, it will acquire the sanctity of a sacrament. In fact, it is in that spirit that a Hindu is ordained to go through his life. Even such intensely animal processes like eating are looked upon as *samskārās* directed to a spiritual purpose and acquire a sanctity which helps in the culture of the human soul.

The Hindu scheme of life ordains the daily observance of a number of religious practices known as *karmānushṭānas* which have a double purpose. Each such practice reminds him of the divine governance of the world and orients his entire mind, speech and act to God. By doing them in the manner prescribed, he continuously lives in a climate of God-consciousness. They cleanse the mind of its dross of accumulated evil propensities and make for *chitta śuddhi.* It is only a mind so purified that can turn to God. The Kingdom of Heaven is only for the pure in the heart. Knowledge of the spirit, *Ātma Vidyā*, can be conveyed only to one of pure mind in which alone can instruction ripen into realisation. The rituals of *karmānushṭānas* are not therefore idle practices devised by a selfish designing priestcraft, but essential disciplines for the catharsis of the mind and the efflorescence of the soul. They may drop off on the fulfilment of their function, but they are not to be voluntarily given up. The spiritual education of the Hindu begins with the performance of ordained duties with faith and fervour, with *bhakti* and *śraddhā.* Each man should go through the discipline himself and there can be no delegation of it to another. The purification of the mind and the chastening of the heart for which these *anushṭānas* are intended prepare the ground for the cultivation of *bhakti* and the acquisition of *jñāna* both of which take him up in the spiritual ladder.

It is not an ascetic or world-negating way of life that Hinduism recommends. Man is not asked to withdraw from the concerns of life totally or prematurely. Hinduism recognised *adhikāribhēda* or difference between man and man in respect of qualification and capacity. It only cautions against abandon to earthly pursuits. It reminds us that secular avocations are only means for livelihood. but they do not

exhaust life. One is counselled to go through life in a spirit of detachment and with a sense of duty. Activity should be governed by an ascetic attitude at one end and should have a dedicatory purpose at the other. It may be said that all this is a counsel of perfection which is beyond the ordinary man. That we cannot be the best immediately is no reason why we should not strive for it in howsoever small a way. *Svalpamasya dharmasya trāyatē mahatōbhayāt.* 'Even a little of this *dharma* will keep a man from great fear.'

Hinduism is an optimistic religion. It does not say 'now or never'. Its belief in *punarjanma* fills a man with the hope that, if he is not able to perfect himself in this life, he need not despair. He can do so in future lives. Each life carries its moral and spiritual balance over to the next and gives him then a higher start from which to strive further on and on through a succession of lives till he finally perfects himself. The case is otherwise with one who acquires demerit in this life which will be debited against him in the next. In that life, it is up to him to wipe it out or to add to his liabilities. The possibility and the duration of man's spiritual education are not exhausted by the present life. A man determines himself in this and future lives by his *karmas* which hold sway over him *in their operation.* But, he can, if he will, determine them *in their origination.* He can also free himself from their constraint either by the grace of God which will cut the bonds of *karma*, or, upon getting the enlightenment of *ātma-jñāna*, when the bonds cannot bind the higher Self that he would then realise. The assurance of *mukti* or liberation from *samsāric* bondage is the optimistic note in Hindu religion. *Mōksha* in Hinduism is both salvation and liberation. It is salvation because it is liberation.

All the world over, we are planning for prosperity. The several schemes devised for it are motivated by conflicting ideologies which have carried the conflict from the minds of men into their hearts and actions. And the result is that Peace in the world is as elusive as ever. There cannot be many and rival paths to peace. There can be only one way and that is the way that takes a man to his God. Once set on that road, man will start with being at peace with himself and will learn to be at peace with his fellows. For, he knows that they are actuated by the same idea and the same desire. Goodness, devotion and wisdom are universal. In that world there is no foreigner. These goods grow by sharing unlike the earthly goods which cannot be shared at all. In our plans so far there is no place for the man of religion. The politician and the economist have both elbowed him out. History records that these two have, more often than not, brought about the disruption of peace. For not only are they concerned with things of the earth which divide rather than unite, but no one of their kind agrees

with another. It is in this context that the man of religion comes in. The world has been saved and safeguarded in the truest sense of the terms by the great and holy personages, the sages and saints, persons who walked with God and who showed the way. Let us give a sporting chance to that way detailed diversely in different religions with variations in emphasis, but not conflict of content. If mankind treads the path, peace among men will be in sight much sooner and more easily than our Five, Seven and Ten Year Plans envisage. What we need most is spiritual planning rather than mere planning for prosperity as it is understood now-a-days. In our efforts to raise the standard of living we have omitted to raise the standard of life. It is to this latter purpose that every great religion calls its votaries to direct their thoughts and bend their wills. This is a mission which every religious man must make his own. There is no special community called the men of religion. Each man infused with religious faith and fervour practising the prescriptions of his faith with earnestness and devotion is a man of religion.

Religions may differ in regard to what they conceive to be the origin and nature of man; but there can be no doubt that in broad outlines they all agree in respect of his ultimate destiny. Howsoever he came and whatever he may be, man's paramount interest must be to liquidate his finitehood and relapse into the Infinite. We may start from different places, tread different roads, but we are sure to meet at the same goal. We are all pilgrims to the Eternal. Our physical and mental equipages may vary. But it is the same Star that beckons to us from afar. Let us silence our wrangles, fix our face on that brightness and traverse, independently if we please, or arm in arm if we choose, the paths that ultimately lead to the same perfection. And to that end, let us so order our lives that they do not hinder in any manner, but in all ways help to lighten our earthly cares and heighten our heavenly aspirations. "Take up the Cross," said Christ and "follow Me." *Māmēkam śaranam vraja*, said Krishna. 'Grieve not, take refuge in Me and I shall free you from all your imperfections.' That call keeps ringing in humanity's ear for all time above the dust and din of worldly strife. God speaks in different tongues, yet to the same purpose. It is a call which fills every breast with hope and cheer, courage and confidence. It is the authentic voice of God inviting each one of us to a bourne from which there is no return.

MAN—WHENCE AND WHITHER

As a Christian sees it

By Dr. P. D. Devanandan

The Christian belief is that man is created by God. On this there has been no difference of opinion in the history of Christian thought. As a creature, therefore, man is different from and other than the Creator. In the same way it is held that, although man is part of creation, he is different from the rest of creation. This is because, unlike other creatures, man alone is capable of responding in fellowship to the Creator. Indeed, the purpose for which man was created is that he might experience in the end, to the fullest, such fellowship with God. That is man's destiny, "the high calling wherewith he is called". It is man's supreme vocation, the purpose for which he is made, on the one hand, and the distinctive mark which separates man from other living beings, on the other.

Man-in-Relation-with God

For this reason, Christian faith holds that man was created "in the image of God". This is to affirm the fact that man reflects the nature of God, but that he is not of the same substance as God. Man's reality is derived from the reality of God, and the more truly he reflects the nature of God, the more truly he is man, man as God intends him to be. The figure of the "image" conveys the meaning of kinship, not of identity. Christian tradition has similarly used the analogy of the father-son relationship to describe both the intimacy of the bond of loving concern which ties God to man, and the state of absolute dependence of man on God in which alone man can truly image God.

Another figure of speech which is also frequently employed in Biblical thinking about God is that of King, the absolute sovereign on whom his subjects wholly depend. The emphasis here is on the kingship, the sovereignty, which God exercises over his creation in general and over man in particular. Man alone, however, is capable of consciously acknowledging that sovereignty in his life. What is more, in so doing he brings the realm of nature also under God's sovereign sway. Yet another figure of speech is that of Master-slave (servant) relationship which, of course, is representative of the Græco-Roman culture of New Testament times to indicate the same total dependence (*cf.* Galations VI: 17).

To Christian faith, thus, man is truly man only in relation with God. This is the essential nature of man. Man's sense of being an "I" is due to his being confronted by the "Thou" of God. The Christian man would say "I am because Thou art". If I may be permitted to put it so, because of this conception of *essential* man as man-in-relation-with-God, in the Christian view, the man whom God intends to be, the man God created, "true" man (*cf.* J. Maritain's *True Humanism*) is not just *māṇava* or *purusha* but *bhakta*.

The Biblical account of creation is, of course, couched in the language of religious myth, but the essential truth it seeks to convey to faith is not only that man is man-in-relation-with-God but that man is man-in-relation-with other man. More recent Christian thought has been concerned with unravelling the mystery of the man-woman nature of the origin of mankind as we find it recorded in the Genesis story. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. I: 27). Here is the implication, later developed in Christian thought, not only of the complementary nature of man and woman in relation to one another, but also of the essential equality of man and woman in the whole scheme of life and in the creative purpose of God. I should admit that Christians have not quite fathomed the mystery of this affirmation of interdependence and basic equality of the sexes which underlies this Biblical insight. Nor would I claim that this is something unique in the Christian faith. But it does seem true that in Christian culture—which should be differentiated from Western culture—the place of the woman in society has been given religious sanction. This is because Christian anthropology has always been concerned with mankind rather than with man as against woman. Perhaps this may be the right place in this essay where I may make the point somewhat sharply that what is said about the Christian view of the origin and destiny of man also applies equally to woman.

Man-in-Community

Right through the records of the Christian Scriptures there is a persistent emphasis not on man as an isolated individual but as man-in-community. Man is truly man only in so far as he is found in the network of human relations which make what the Bible calls "people," and which in modern language we call "society". In Hindu thought also this is implied in such terms as *jana* (people) and *jāti* (caste). But I think the word *lokasangraha* in its Gita usage is in some ways a happier rendering of the Biblical idea of people, and I suppose that the current usage of the word "community" in the English language seeks to bring out this same meaning of the holding together of people, in

which alone a person finds himself as a person among persons and in relation to *the* Person.

When Christian faith is impatient of any mere impersonal interpretation of Ultimate Reality, it is expressing its conviction that it is not only the present necessity of historical circumstance that calls for personal relationship of empirical individual men and women with God but because the very nature of man as created by God in His image and likeness rests four-square on the twin-foundations of Personality and Community. Man's origin and destiny are both explicable only in the light of what Jaques Maritain calls True Humanism, of the understanding man as man-in-relation-with-God and man-in-community, the *bhakta* in *satsangh*. This also explains why any view of *karma-samsāra*, the retributory consequence of human activity is unacceptable to the Christian, for that principle can only apply in all fairness to individuals in severe isolation, whether such individuality is real or unreal. It cannot apply to persons in community without losing its rigorous logic of individual retribution. In fact, it is open to question whether the principle of *karma-samsāra* can be interpreted to lend support to what we moderns call social justice.

The Christian understanding of personal relationship in Christian faith implies that essentially it involves freedom given to man either to accept or reject the Will of God for him and the rest of creation. Man's response is primarily the response of a purposive will. This is the ground for yet another insight we gain from the Biblical description of man as created in God's image and likeness, namely, that man is made so that he can share in the creative purpose of God *if* he is truly man, that is man-in-relation-with-God, and man-in-community-with-other men. The Christian understanding of the *bhakta*, if I may be permitted to put it so, is one who actively participates in the creative purpose of the Bhagavan in the here and now. Thus *lokasangraha* becomes meaningful for us not in terms merely of human desire (*kāma*), nor in terms of the immediate goals of such human desire (*karma phala*) but in the light the very Will of the Bhagavan. In Biblical language the one petition of the *bhakta* is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me *do* ?" For the one governing motive of man's very existence is that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Thus Christian *bhakti* is the willed response of man reached in consequence of a free decision in community with like-minded *bhaktas* to fulfil God's Will. Man finds self-fulment in service. So St. Paul gives sage advice to his fellow-Christians:

> "Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself,

taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2: 5–8).

Man, the Sinner, in Opposition to God

Nevertheless, writing in another context, St. Paul agonises over man's inherent inability to be what he truly is, what he is intended to be, and he will be eventually, because of a rift within his being.

> "I do not understand my own action. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. No longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me" (Rom. 7: 15–20).

This is empirical man in Christian thought—man the sinner. He finds himself in a strange predicament. On the one hand, he knows that he should be what he is intended to be, and yet, on the other hand, he is inclined to be what he actually is.

According to the Bible, thus, the problem of man and society, and, for that matter, the problem of the world itself, is that of sin. Throughout the records of Bible history the emphasis is placed on the fact of man's persistent opposition to the creative purpose of God. He is no longer the "good" creature that God designed at creation. He is in rebellion. His opposition openly breaks out even in the every-day decisions of his life. The Biblical assumption of the "fall" of man is based upon this contrary nature in man as we know him in history. Something had happened between creation and civilization. Man developed a tendency to be man-in-opposition to God rather than man-in-relation-with God. He is a self-willed creature.

Sin results from the human abuse of the gift of free will which involves the freedom to act either responsibly or irresponsibly, to be able to say, "Yes" or "No". This Biblical conception of "fall" involves a paradoxical assertion of man's powerlessness to resist evil and his capacity to respond to good. This paradox is very true to the facts of human experience: man's actual existence and the inescapable demand placed upon him, his impotence and his creativity. Christian thought avoids the danger of fatalism and moral optimism by insisting that man's bondage and freedom are bound together in a theo-centric existence wherein God is acknowledged as free, sovereign

and redemptive. That is why from the Christian point of view in all purely human striving for social justice and individual righteousness there is both hope of achievement and doom of failure. Christian faith is realistic enough to admit man's innate ability to be good by himself. At the same time it recognizes that through dependence on God's grace man can make good.

The Nature and Consequence of Sin

The Bible has no single, comprehensive definition of sin. But it maintains that sin becomes manifest in man in every sort of act, condition and intention. Disobedience (to God) is always the key-word used in the Bible to describe sin. And because sin begins in disobedience, occasioned by a commandment, it is inescapably followed by judgment. This consists in the fact that the dependent, personal relationship is broken. Also God responds actively in punishment, which results in spiritual, social and material dislocation of all human life in the world.

Much of man's life now is in a state of disorder, the Christian believes, because man individually and collectively chooses to direct his affairs in accordance with his own will. This perversity is creating chaos not only in his individual life and in all human ordering of society. Not only that. It affects also the entire world of nature, which man tends to manipulate in order to further his own ends rather than allow material nature to fulfil the creative purpose for which it is designed.

The root-cause of all this disorder is the individual and collective selfishness of man. Self-love has displaced other love. What is more, self-love makes daring attempts to overpower and dominate other love. The Biblical understanding of the sum and substance of all ethics is, therefore, not in what is popularly called the Golden Rule, "Love thy neighbour as thyself". That is only one aspect of a twin-imperative which may not be bifurcated, the one from the other. The Golden Rule so called is derived from and inspired by the commandment, "Love the Lord, thy God (here the *Iśvara* is the same as the *Brahman*) with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength". Whatever the original Hebrew understanding of the psychology of man, by those terms 'heart,' 'soul,' 'mind', and 'strength', later Christian thought has accepted that in their collective content these terms indicate a total devotion of the whole man to God. And because such *bhakti* is impossible for any individual *ātman* except in the context of a sense of human solidarity (*lokasangraha*) the "love of the neighbour" is an integral aspect of the Christian understanding of *bhakti*, devotion in community.

In this-worldly life, the persistence of sin in man both as a voluntary and a constituent aspect of his nature makes it impossible for him to realise his destiny. In *all* bhakti of the empirical man there is an element of this perversity which stands in the way of our *bhakti* now being truly *bhakti*. That is why what seems to others "the Christian's obsession with sin". Such misunderstanding is to be expected, especially where we are apt to think that the real trouble with man is his ignorance of the true nature of his self. The Christian view about what prevents man from realizing his destiny is not *avidya* but *ahaṁkāra*, which is construed as self-will and which pitches itself against the Will of God and causes not only all the strife within and for man as man but also all the disorder in the whole world of human decision, the realm of history. It makes the present context of historical existence at any time confusing and evil.

Man, the Forgiven Sinner

Nevertheless, the Christian contention is that, despite this disorder which is very real, the creative process is indeed directed by the Will of God to fulfil the purposive end of God for the destiny of man and the whole of creation. Christian thought therefore makes a distinction between holy history (heilsgeschichte) and secular history. The latter is marred by human decision and is all the time deviating from the ultimate destiny of the creative process. But the undergirding purposive Will of God, however, is nevertheless being realised, and in the end God's will is assuredly to be fulfilled. The Christian does not regard these as parallel processes. Nor does he consider them unrelated, the one in some sense unreal, and the other alone being real. On the other hand, he would hold that the two processes are in a sense intermingled, so that time is, as it were, shot through with eternity. Thus the Christian talks about man as a citizen of two worlds. This is really a way of stating that this is a world of *Māyā*, a world which is both real and unreal, conditioned by time and shot through with eternity, the scene of human endeavour and the plane of Divine Activity. But here the *sat-asat* nature of world-life is not understood in terms of Ultimate Reality but Final Purpose. So the Biblical word 'vanity' used for this world where the vain (meaning self-willed) activity of man in what we call history tends to claim for itself a cosmic sovereignty which can belong to God alone. The Christian man thus works in time but lives for eternity. He is in bondage to self-seeking motives but by the grace of God is capable of living as a child of God who is constantly endeavouring to do his Father's will. In the words of St. Paul:

> "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for the creation was subject to vanity, not

of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God.... And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for the adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience" (Rom. 8: 19–25).

The Christian faith does not stop with the conviction about the sinfulness of man in the here and now. It goes on to proclaim and testify to the fact of the forgiveness of sin. At the centre of history as it were, an event of cosmic significance happened, the Christian believes. This was the coming into history of God himself in order to initiate a new era. It is the beginning of the New Creation. On the plane of history by the incoming of God, by his involvement in a real way with the entire creation, and with human life in particular, it was demonstrated that the self-love of man which is at the root of all sin, need not inevitably retard, much less eventually prevent the ultimate fulfilment of God's purpose for the world and for man. To us the purpose of the Incarnation was not primarily to give man a body of sublime teaching. It was rather to release man from the bondage of sin. If only man would accept that his entire future and destiny rests upon his total dependence on God, and if only he would seek to reorder his life in that sense of commitment, in a very real sense, he would be made over again. This, in Christian faith, let it be said in all humility, is a fact of experience in that there is a new sense of freedom from the downward drag of self-will, and a new access of strength because of the inward dynamic of the spirit of God enabling man to live so that the old sense of failure and frustration is displaced by an assurance of hope that he is being restored to be the man that he was intended to be.

Now, the Christian faith is that what God has done for man in the person and work of Christ is for *all* men. This note of universality in the Christian belief about Jesus Christ is not widely understood. In the words of a prayer which is said daily in Christian Churches, which is called the Prayer of General Thanks-giving, we Christians pray:

"Almighty God, Father of mercies, we thine unworthy servants do offer unto thee our humble and heartfelt thanks for all thy goodness and loving kindness to us and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life. And above all we thank thee for thine inestimable love

in the redemption of the world through Our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace and for the hope of glory."

To quote the words of St. Paul again:

> "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" (Rom. 6: 1–5).

When the Christian talks of being identified with the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, he means to say that the believer steadily ceases to be the man that he had become by reason of his own self-righteousness, and that in fellowship with the living Christ he is being made over into the new being. That is why the Bible talks about "being born again," of "newness of life" and of "the hope of glory". Or as a great Christian put it, "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me". "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things have passed away; all things have become new."

The Beginning of New Creation

In all this the Christian claim is that the work of the transformation begun in the human person who has so committed himself to God in Christ is altogether the work of God. It is not something that is being achieved by reason of man's own merits or of his own striving, either individually or collectively. "To the man who has found peace with God by humbly accepting His forgiveness something happens which begins to make evil ways distasteful and God and good desirable," remarks Dr. John Baillie. And Baillie goes on to point out, "Yet it is important to notice the word *begins*. Few Christians, even after they have accepted the release from the guilt of their sin offered by God in Christ, ever do much more than make a beginning with the living of a holy life. Sin still retains a powerful hold over their wills, though it is no longer the old strangle hold". That is why Christian theologians distinguish what they call the state of grace from the state of glory, which stands for the Christian pilgrim's progress as a forgiven sinner, in the fellowship of the Church, transformed by the inner working of the Holy Spirit to be "the child of God," to be man in the fullest sense of that word, to be the kind of man that Jesus Christ was on earth, "the earnest of the new creation".

In the Christian view, New Creation is the work of God, not in isolated individual lives but in a community of persons who are committed to this blessed assurance of a new creation as a present reality. It is this conviction which gives significance to what has come to be known as the Church. In the New Testament the fellowship of Christians is not described as the Church but as the Church of God or the Church of Christ. Several figures of speech are employed to describe this divine-human community. The most common of such expressions are "the household of God", "the body of Christ" and "the saints" that congregate in one place. That is why the Christian man never regards himself as isolated from the rest of the community of those among and within whom the spirit of God is alive.

The Christian faith is that it is only in the living Spirit of Christ that we can enjoy full community with one another, and that it is only in our togetherness with one another we can enjoy full communion with Christ. "For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Cor. 12: 26 ff). So writes St. Paul.

This belief finds support in the teaching about the Holy Spirit. The redemptive work of God for and in men is the work of the indwelling Spirit of God. It is creatively at work within men to make them what they are intended to be. The forgiven sinner that man now is, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, he is led beyond death to "the hope of glory".

Here it must be frankly admitted that the history of the Church has not vindicated this claim. That is largely because the Church has developed quite frequently into merely human organizations in various areas of our culture. Here again is another demonstration of the truth the Christian believes that even at his very best, although he might have appropriated the gift of God's forgiveness, the hold of sin, individually and collectively, has not made him yet wholly the New Being.

Consummation of Creation

The Christian belief is that what was begun, and is being carried through in history, in the person and work of Jesus Christ for the restoration of man will eventually be fulfilled at the end of time and of creation. Perhaps the better word, from the Christian point of view, is 'consummation' rather than 'fulfilment'. This is because the ultimate destiny of man and nature in creation is not regarded as

eventually leading by progression to some sort of a completion of the creative process, but that the 'end' would involve *both* a dissolution of the present scheme of things *and* a total transformation of life. The destiny of man is thus beyond history, on the one hand, and bound up with the *final* establishment of the Kingdom of God, on the other. This is the Christian's conception of *moksha* which is both 'deliverance' and 'salvation,' in that in such transformation of humanity there is "not merely divine completion of human incompleteness but a purging of human guilt and sin by divine judgement and mercy".

Thus both the origin (genesis) and the end of the whole scheme of creation, in which man is included, are to be regarded in Christian faith as beyond history—pre-history in the one case and post-history in the other case, if I may use such clumsy terms. In any case they do not deal with events occurring in time. They deal rather with the realm of eternity and of infinity, and the most significant feature of this realm beyond history is the *total* absence of sin, which means no opposition of any sort to the absolute sovereignty of God.

Human destiny is thus conceived not as absorption into the divine but as loving fellowship with God, which in Biblical language is described as "the hope of glory". And there can be no "glory" for the individual until the "glorified *community*" comes into being, and the society of the redeemed is complete. That would be the destiny of man, then, in Christian faith—transformed life in the Kingdom of God at the end of time and of creation.

A MODERN HINDU APPROACH TO ETHICS

By Sri. J. S. R. L. Narayana Moorty

Any account of the conception of man as an ethical individual must start with a discussion of the place of man in the scheme of things, his relationship with the world at large, the ultimate goal or purpose of his life and the means of achieving it. The essential Hindu conception of man is that of mysticism, and Hinduism shares it with some other religions like Mahayana and Zen Buddhism, Taoism, Sufism and some forms of Christianity, though it is not essential to Christianity, and with some religious philosophies like that of Plotinus. But mysticism has not been consistently developed till the modern time, when we can observe it in its purest form in the thought of J. Krishnamurti, the modern revivalists of Zen Buddhism—D. T. Suzuki and Christmas Humphreys; and alongside a positive metaphysical system in the thought of Sri Aurobindo.

Man's essential unity with Life or Reality or God, or by whatever name you call it, is the keynote of mysticism. If man feels himself sundered or alienated from Life, such a feeling is illusory. But man perceives his true nature at least at certain times in his life, and because of this there is a constant striving on the part of man to re-unite himself with Life. His illusion of separation has to be got over by a true knowledge of himself, for the sense of separation from and the resulting opposition to Life is very painful to him.

But Life is not static. It is dynamic, creating itself from moment to moment. It is ever-acting. And man too must act in order to exist. Indeed, to exist is to act, and to be in constant relationship with the environment and Life at large. Because of his feeling of separation man's actions bring opposition and disharmony in the life of the individual and consequently in the life of the society. Thus is moral evil created. Unless man's actions are truly ethical, that is, completely free from all sense of opposition and duality, they cannot but bring him suffering. Only ethical action can bring lasting happiness to man, for only ethical action is free from the sense of opposition and duality.

Life itself is the highest value for man, and his ultimate aim is to become united with Life, from which he somehow feels he is severed.

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[1] George Grimm, *The Doctrine of the Buddha*, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1957, p. 118.

The source of all values, including ethical values, is Life. Above and beyond Life all values are illusory. No authority can give man any value, for then he would be dependent on it for his value and would not be free. Authority breeds conformity. Only free action is ethical action. And action cannot be free unless it is enlightened by knowledge and understanding as to the true nature of man and Life. Only such knowledge can free man from his several bondages. But such knowledge is not of a known thing by a supposed knower. Here since the knower and the known are essentially one, the distinction between the subject and the object, which arises only out of a feeling of separation, does not exist. In such a state of knowledge there is no difference between knowing and being.

Happiness, then, is the *summum bonum* of man's life. Happiness can be negatively defined as the absence of suffering. It should be distinguished from pleasure and pain which together constitute what we call suffering. Pleasure and pain both belong to the realm of becoming, whether it is becoming in action or becoming in man's life generally. Pleasure may generally be defined as that state of consciousness of an individual in which he *knows* that he has achieved something he has been desiring and striving for; in which by a process of comparing and contrasting his present state with some other state either in the past or in the present or in an imagined future he does not yet remain content with his achievement; and in which state he wishes to strive further for a higher end. This is what we call becoming, or constant movement from what one is to what one is not and what he thinks he ought to become. Almost the same is the case with pain. When one is disappointed or frustrated in his efforts, when his desires are thwarted (though sometimes he may not be fully aware of what his desires are—*i.e.*, though his desires sometimes remain unconscious), and when he wants to get away from his present state to some other state which he thinks is better than this, then we may say that his experience is that of pain. In either case becoming is characteristic; and becoming may be said to be one of the fundamental properties of suffering.

Furthermore, in our suffering we are conscious of ourselves as opposed to that "other than ourselves" which may be the thing we desire, or the state to which we want to attain, or our object of love or hatred. There is a sharp separation between the "I" and the "not I". Indeed, it may be said with Grimm, "You are, because you suffer,"[1] meaning thereby that we are conscious of our "self" only when we suffer. This dictum may be substituted for that of Descartes—"I think, therefore I am," for the former may be said to be a generalisation of the latter. Only when there is a problem at hand there is

thinking, and the existence of a problem is a sign of dissatisfaction in the individual. Intense self-consciousness is a concomitant characteristic of suffering.

A third characteristic of suffering may be said to be that it is owing to an attachment on the part of man to a desire, especially psychological desire, or to an object of desire. Desire may be purely animal or physiological as in the case of needs like hunger, sex, bodily warmth and physical security; or it may be psychological as desire for property, fame, power or psychological security. It is the psychological desire that is mainly responsible for most of the typically human suffering. The problem of desire in either of the above cases is magnified to a large extent owing to the capacities in man for psychological memory and imagination. The psychological desires in man arise out of his self-consciousness which has given rise to his sense of individuality or ego-sense. Had man lacked his sense of individuality, *i.e.*, his ego, he would perhaps have lacked his psychological desires, for they are the outcome of his psychological fear (for instance, of death, of the loss of him—"self" in relation, to something unknown), his craving for the continuance of his supposed permanent ego, which in turn are direct products of his sense of individuality or ego-sense. Man's suffering is very much exaggerated by his self-consciousness.

It is not physical desires as such that are responsible for man's suffering, but his attachment to the psychological desires. In any state man has certain needs and desires which require a minimum of satisfaction. Without them he would be an "empty shell". If man lacked his sense of individuality and the resulting identification of himself with the objects of his desire, if he had no attachment or if he did not cultivate the opposite of attachment, renunciation, his suffering would have been very much less than what it is now.

So, suffering may be said to be characterised by the presence of (1) constant becoming, (2) self-consciousness or the sense of individuality or ego-sense, and (3) attachment. Though suffering is not generally understood in this sense, a keen analysis of what constitutes psychological pleasure and pain will bring out the above characteristics of suffering. But a distinction should be drawn between psychological suffering and suffering due to natural causes. The latter can be alleviated only by a better scientific control of nature, whereas the former does not diminish even when man learns to gain a mastery over nature, for it can be removed only by a constant self-knowledge.

Absence of suffering is one of the two senses in which the term "happiness" is used in tradition, including Buddhism. The Sanskrit words like *moksha, kaivalya* and *mukti*, used to express the liberated

state of man, suggest the negative as well as the positive meaning of happiness.

The positive definitions of happiness vary from school to school in traditional Hinduism. The state of release in some schools (in Buddhism and Advaita Vedanta) is said to be positively indefinable, except perhaps that it consists of bliss which again becomes indefinable. Happiness in such instances would negatively be defined as a state in which the distinction between the essential Reality in man and the Reality in the objective universe disappears, or as a state in which there is a general freedom from all opposition and duality. In some schools the ultimate aim of man's life (in this case it need not be happiness) is a complete isolation of the soul or pure spirit in man, freed from the shackles of matter, in which is included mind with all its functions as, for instance, the ego-sense (*Sāmkhya*); or it may be freedom from the turmoil of life and experience (*Nyāya* and *Vaiseshika*). The soul should become equally indifferent to both pleasure and pain. Or, happiness may be defined elsewhere (in Ramanuja's school of Visishtadvaita) as the attribute of the individual soul when it is in communion (*samsarga*) with the Universal Soul which is here conceived as a personality. This is a state of loving devotion to God which is a result of the absolute surrender of the individual will to the will of God. Or again, as in the Madhva school, the highest aim of man's life may be the service of God, when man is in a state of bliss.

Though the above list of definitions of happiness or the highest aim of life is not exhaustive, it is typical. A common feature which runs through many of the definitions is that happiness is conceived both positively and negatively, though there is sometimes a reluctance and a feeling of impossibility to define it positively. But there is no doubt as to the positive nature of happiness.

Having enumerated the various conceptions of the highest aim of man's life in Hinduism, let us now turn to the means of achieving the ultimate aim. Three different means are conceived—the means of knowledge, the means of loving devotion to God, and the way of selfless action. It is with the third that we will be mainly concerned in our discussion. Any one of the three means or different combinations of them have been advocated by the traditional Hindu schools. The means is pure knowledge as to the non-difference of the individual soul from the Absolute in Sankara's Advaita; it is devotion to God with the performance of *dharma* (duty) as the auxiliary means in Ramanuja's system; it is pure selfless action in some portions of the *Bhagavad Gita*; and it is a co-ordination (*samuccaya*) of either knowledge and action or devotion and action in Yamunacharya's system. A common factor which characterises all the three ways of

attaining the ultimate end is selflessness or absence of the ego-sense, as it is the absence of the sense of individuality and the resulting sense of opposition which characterises any of the conceptions of happiness. We can here observe that in the Hindu thought the means and the end are one and the same. But in Ramanuja we find that though the individual will is surrendered to the will of the Lord, the soul of the individual is conceived by him as somehow maintaining its individuality. Still, this soul perceives itself as forming a factor in the Absolute. We can see that Ramanuja's position is that of an unstable halfway house between extreme monism and extreme dualism. But it is only in mystic experience that all duality is transcended. In no intellectual system we can obtain a rigorous monism for it is in the nature of intellect to create duality.

Though the whole of Hinduism has arisen out of purely selfish motives—as, for instance, the immortality of the self, or the freedom of the individual self from suffering—the Hindus soon perceived that as long as man remained selfish, *i.e.*, bound by his ego-sense or sense of individuality, his goal could not be reached. They saw that man's existence is limited by his ego-sense and that the ego-sense stands as a hindrance in the achievement of his aim. So they strived to free themselves from their sense of individuality either by suggesting themselves that it is due to an illusion which also creates the phenomenal world of name and form (*māyā*), with its differences; or by involving themselves in selfless action (*nishkama karma*), dedicating the fruits of action to God; or by plunging themselves in devotion to God. They sometimes supposed that renunciation of the world would lead one to the ultimate end, but they soon realised, especially when the *Bhagavad Gita* taught them, that even when man renounced the world he may still remain selfish, and so his suffering may still continue. Renunciation, which is the opposite of attachment, is still within the limits of the ego. After all, we renounce something only with a motive or higher purpose in view, and so the motive, being selfish, still binds us. Even while living in this world we may be free from attachment to it. And even if we renounce the world we may not be free from the inner bondage to it. It is the inner freedom that is essential and not the suppression of a desire or renunciation of the object of desire. To attain to a state of freedom from suffering one must start with freeing himself from selfishness. If freedom is the end it is also the means. But how can we free ourselves from the self-sense? It is here that "knowledge" come into our discussion. Knowledge means knowledge of the self (*Ātmavidyā*). The sense of individuality is due to an illusion; and what is knowledge except realising every moment that our ego-sense is an illusion and that it is not our true

being? There is no understanding of the cause of this illusion or of the origin of it, for it is beyond our capacity, but we can know how the process of illusion works and how it binds us, bringing suffering into our lives. It is this knowledge that liberates us. By realishing, as the processes arise, but not on an after-reflection, and without identifying ourselves with them, or condemning them, how we are bound from moment to moment, how the illusion makes us greedy and selfish, we are free from the processes of the self or ego. When you are free from the limitations imposed upon you by your ego where is the difference between you and the Reality or God you have been striving for? For the thing that creates all difference has ceased to bind you and, for you, has ceased to exist and with it, the differences and duality created by it. When there are no differences, naturally there is no distinction between knowing Reality and being it. Such is the meaning of *mahāvākyas* (great utterances) like "*Aham bralmāsmi*" (I am Brahman), "*Tat tvam asi*" (That you are), "*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*" (All is Brahman), "*Ekam eva advitīyam Brahmā*" (Brahman is one without a second). We must also see that this realisation is not continuous; it is from moment to moment. If it were continuous such sentences as the above, which were obviously products of an after-reflection, could not have been uttered. Only action enlightened by such a realisation is ethical action, since that alone creates harmony and does not bring opposition with itself.

Devotion, to start with, does require a personal God as an object. But as long as there is the difference between us and God, does not that difference bring suffering to us? Then we cannot say that we have achieved our highest goal. Letting alone the probability of the God of our devotion being a projection of our own desires and hopes, does not such a separation between ourselves and our God create in us disappointment and suffering, as, for instance, when our God does not love us in return, or give us what we pray him for, or when He loves our neighbour soul more than He loves us? For, if our devotion is not motivated by a selfish desire, if it does not bring us something in return, shall we be still interested in and love our God? It may be that our emotions require an object to cling on to; but it is our business to understand the significance of our emotions and not be led away by them. Devotion to God may generally be interpreted to mean that there is a constant urge and restlessness in us to free ourselves from all limitations and to unite ourselves with an eternal Being, a glimpse of which we already have in some rare moments of our life. But as long as there is the urge in you to become something else than what you are, you are defeated in your purpose, since the urge, being created by your selfishness, stands in the way of our goal.

We said that action until it is enlightened by knowledge cannot be truly ethical. Action, to be truly ethical, must be completely free from selfishness, and from all opposition, including that between the so-called good and bad and right and wrong, and consequently from all choice. For all our conceptions of goodness and evil are relative to our self and all choice is a choice for the self. The only good action is action freed from the limitations of the self and all selfish action is morally evil. Thus stated there can be no opposition between the good and the bad. Only when the evil is not can there be the good.

But a critic may raise the objection that any action is not ethical unless, first of all, there is an ego or individual self to which all actions are referred, and unless there is an opposition between the good and the bad or the right and the wrong. Both these assumptions are, of course, denied by the Hindu thinkers. They do not deny that action referred to a self is possible, but they only deny that such action is ethical. We can see that this is the case if we observe that even from the earliest times it has been the cherished desire of the Hindu to be free from all opposites, including the opposition between the good and the bad. We can find in the Upanishada passages referring to this liberated state of man where he is touched neither by good actions nor by evil actions, where he is beyond good and evil.[2] If we take this as the essential spirit of Hinduism, then we have to deny or ignore the contrary trends which we find alongside the above even from the times of the Vedas. Furthermore, in concepts like *Nishkāma karma* we find it clearly asserted that ethical action does not require an ego. Observe the following passage from Sri Aurobindo's '*Essays on the Gita*'. He says that even when you are free from your ego or individuality, "Action will still be done in you because Nature is always at work, but you must learn and feel that your self is not the doer of the action."[3] The difficulty in imagining such an action occurs only when we suppose that the momentary ego that gathers impressions and is inflated or deflated by success and failure is the doer of actions, and is the real individual. But is real individuality the accidental personality or the ego which craves for permanence and which thinks it is the doer and enjoyer of all actions? Is not the underlying Reality in us the only individuality we possess? And is not this Reality one with the Reality of the whole universe? Then are we not really asserting our individuality even when we are free from our egoism? When we are one with Nature or Life or God or whatever you like, there may not

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[2] *See* E. W. Hopkins, *Ethics of India*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1924, pp. 68–69.

[3] Sri. Aurobindo's *Essays on the Gita*, II Series, Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, 1928, p. 485.

be the "you" or the "me" which is the agent and patient of all our actions. But Nature in us, as Aurobindo said, will not keep silent; it stirs us into action. Such action is necessarily in harmony with Life or Nature, for there is now nothing in us that opposes it. All moral evil arises from our ego-sense or selfishness, and when we are free from it where is the scope for evil? But till you are completely free from your egoism are your actions really ethical? You (your ego) may choose only good actions by setting up some standards of goodness and rightness. But are not the standards themselves contaminated by your selfishness? Besides, is not all choosing choosing for a self or ego? That means, is not all choosing selfish? Now, can you say that your actions, which are the results of your choosing, are completely ethical? Further, is not choosing a painful process? Does it not involve suffering? And if your aim is happiness should not your actions be choiceless? Does a flower choose when it blossoms? Does a hen "know" (meaning thereby that it is conscious of itself) when it lays its eggs? Or does a child choose when he revolts against his father if his mother is illtreated by him? We have been accustomed to call actions ethical only when they are chosen, for we feel that unless they are "freely" chosen by the agent responsibility cannot be laid on him. But are we really considering his choice when we either reward or punish him? Is an action really ethical when it is chosen for the sake of a reward or to avoid punishment? Are actions to be judged by some external ends to which they may serve as means? Are not actions both the means and the ends? Should they not be performed just because they are in themselves good and not because they bring you some reward or do not bring some punishment? Are the ends separate from the means? Are they not determined by the means? Is there any real freedom in what is called "free choice" when the choice is always for the self? Is there real freedom when we are not free from the fetters of the self? Is the Good something to be defined in terms of concepts which are necessarily other than itself?

The above ethical views have not been represented traditionally in such an extreme and pure form as this. Egoism and choice have been denied, but the denial is only half-hearted, for we can observe that in many cases while lip-service is paid to the above views, views contrary to them have also been maintained side by side by a sleight of logic. When the contradiction between the two sets of views became too much apparent it has been attempted to be escaped by postulating degrees of Reality on the one hand, and different stages in the life of the individual and differences in social status on the other. Corresponding to these there are also now different ideals of life arranged in a hierarchy—*kāma* (satisfaction of sensual desires), *artha* (economic

well-being), *dharma* (duties that bear no direct fruit but should be done just because they are enjoined by the Vedas), and *moksha* (liberation), which is still recognised as the highest, though even in the other ideals selfishness is indirectly involved. While discussing these ideals a certain amount of practical prudence is exhibited in the adjustment of the interest of the individual with those of the society. If the concept of *dharma* is to be understood as ethical action proper, it is not clear whether it is advocated as a means to the ultimate end, *moksha*, or as an end in itself. Both the views seem to have been maintained in Hinduism, of course, in different schools. Besides, these, there are also the views that the performance of *dharma* enables man to escape from sin and that by freeing him from selfishness it prepares him for *moksha*. The sources of *dharma* or the standard of ethical value are again variously conceived: sometimes the source is the Vedas; when the standard is not to be found there the source is tradition; when there is no guidance available from tradition it is the conduct of *sishtas* (men reputed for their good actions); the source is God where a personal God is maintained and ethical values are deduced directly from the noble ethical qualities of the Lord and lastly, the source of moral standard is one's own conscience. But the essential nature of *dharma*, *viz.*, selflessness, has not always been kept in view. If it were, the search for an external standard of action would have been abandoned.

An answer to the question "Why man's behaviour should be ethical?" is difficult to give. One probable answer is that his ethical behaviour is conducive to the achievement of his highest goal. A second answer would be that he has a moral sense of conscience which dictates certain duties and what is right and what is wrong and that if man goes against his own conscience a sense of sin and consequently suffering would result. A third answer to the question might be that an external authority (as, for instance, God) enjoins duties, and that if the laws of the authority are transgressed the authority would punish the individual. A fourth answer would be that of common-sense, *viz.*, that man in order to exist has to behave in such a manner that his behaviour is conducive to individual and social welfare and harmony, for if his behaviour runs against the dictates of society it is in the long run only to the detriment of the individual. But all these answers have man's selfishness as a common factor. It may be his positive desire for happiness or fear of punishment and suffering. Indeed, when we are asking why man's behaviour should be ethical we are asking for a motive of his actions and all motives are necessarily selfish. In tradition too we find that answers similar to the above have been given though the concepts of heaven and hell were also involved in their answers. But heaven and hell are only temporary abodes in the

life of an individual. Only when man attains *moksha* does his becoming cease. But "duty for duty's sake" has never really been the motto of the Hindus since even the so-called disinterested duties are to be performed either because man has to repay some of his debts either for the gods or for the manes (to whom he owes his existence) or for the sages, and if he did not they might get angry and do something harmful to him; or because they are conducive to his *moksha*. It is only in the formalist school of *Pūrva Mīmāmsā*, and that too in a part of it, that duty for duty's sake is enjoined. This school is the official commentator of the Vedas; especially the ritual portions of it; and it has followed the Vedas to the letter saying that they are eternal and authorless. This view can perhaps be attributed to its desire to safeguard the interests of the Brahmin class.

Even *Nishkāma karma* should never be confused with duty for duty's sake. A duty is something imposed on the individual by an authority; whether it be the authority of a revealed scripture or that of God or that of a supposed inerrant conscience. *Nishkāma karma* is that selfless action which comes out of man naturally when he frees himself from his egoism. Strictly speaking authority has no part to play in it. The word "ought" never exists for the one who has realised.

Dharmas are classified broadly into *sva dharmas* comprising the duties of the individual according to his *varna* and *āsrama* and *sāmānya dharmas*, duties common to all men irrespective of their *varna* and *āsrama*. A second classification (that of *Pūrva Mīmāmsā*) is that of *karmas* or actions of man into *kāmya karmas* and *nityanaimittika karmas* —the first comprising of actions done with an end in view and the second of actions that are purely ethical and performed only because they are enjoined in the Vedas or the Smrtis. *Nitya karmas* are those actions that have to be performed daily without fail; while *naimittikas* are limited to special occasions. Besides the above two classifications, we have also the various debts that have to be paid by the individual to his ancestors or manes, to his teachers or *rishis*; to the various gods and to all living beings. Incidentally, these might be subsumed under the category of *nitya karmas*.

We can see from the above classifications of *dharma* and *karma* that though the ultimate aim of the Hindu has been *moksha* it has not always been kept in view. The various classifications are due to the supposition on the part of the Hindus that renunciation of the world is a necessary qualification for *moksha*, which is obviously wrong. Because of this supposition, the values necessary for human existence have had to be brought in for their acceptance through back doors. If all had renounced the world how would they live when no one toiled, produced and procreated. It is only in the times of the *Bhagavad*

Gita that attention is paid to the inward nature of renunciation. Now renunciation is not of the world and of action but of the results of action and of selfishness. From that time on there has been really no need for a separate fourth *āsrama* called the *turīya* or *sannyāsa*, because it is now internal.

To complete our account of traditional Hindu ethics let us list out the four *āsramas* and the four *varnas*. *Sva dharma*, as we said above, pertains to man as he finds himself in a *varna* and an *āsrama*. The *varna* is a classification of society into classes with differing functions and status; whereas the *āsramas* are stages in the life of the indidual. But *āsrama dharmas* are applicable only to the first three classes who are collectively called the *dvijas*, or the twice-born. Only *varna dharmas* and *sāmānya dharmas* are to be performed by the last class; the *sūdras*. The four *varnas* are—(1) the *Brāhmaṇa* class; (2) the *Kshatriyas*; (3) the *Vaisyas* and (4) *Sūdras*. At first there was only a two-fold division of classes, *viz.*, into *dvijas* and *sūdras* or *dasyus*, where there was a difference in status. The *dvijas* or the upper class people were later divided into the above-mentioned three classes, for the purposes of division of labour and maximum of efficiency. The classes were something like the guilds. But soon the differences in function even among the *dvijas* gave place to differences in status. What exists now in the Hindu society is a confusion of multitudes of castes and sub-castes derived from the original four *varnas* with an equal number of social distinctions. Any arbitrary division of the society into classes is bound to lead to differences in status and to the resulting evil of exploitation of the lower by the higher in the hierarchy. The four *āsramas* are—(1) *Brahmacharya* (the life of the student-celibate); (2) *Grāhasthya* (the life of the house-holder); (3) *Vānaprastha* (the life of the hermit); and (4) *Sannyāsa* (the life of the mendicant-ascetic).

The twin laws of *karma* and rebirth have been postulated as a theoretical justification for the differences in social status. The two laws might have had various origins. They might have been designed with various conscious or unconscious motives. The law of rebirth works as a complement to the law of *karma*. The two laws might have arisen to explain the differences in the propensities of men to attain *moksha*. Or, the law of *karma* might have first started as a justification for the existing differences in social status between the Aryans and the Dasyus, as suggested by Prof. Humayun Kabir.[4] If the differences in social status in this life are the fruits of the actions of the individual in his past life, and if no such actions are to be found

[4] Prof. Humayun Kabir, "*The East and the Problems of Education*," in *Humanism and Education in East and West*, UNESCO, 1953, pp. 109-10.

in this life, they must be attributed to the past lives of the individual. But the question as to what it is that passes on from birth to birth is problematic, since the then-existing philosophy teaches that the same Spirit is immanent in all that is as its essence. And the law of rebirth requires a plurality of souls, which is denied. The difficulty of the problem is evaded by saying that a complex comprising of the subtle body, the mind and its several organs, and the impressions and the fruits of action gathered during the past lives transmigrates and not the Soul which is the same in all. Besides the difficulty of explaining how the Spirit comes into relationship with something which is totally different from itself, there is also the problem that the law of rebirth would not be really effective unless at least a numerical plurality of souls is accepted. The problem gradually leads us into metaphysics. We come to the question that if everything is permeated by the same Spirit how is it we percive it as manifold. At some point or other it has to be said that it is owing to an illusion. The phenomenal world, including the plurality of souls becomes *māyā*. Here we encounter the doctrine of degrees of reality. The phenomenal world is in a lower degree of reality. Our experience of the world of difference is due to *māyā* which is sometimes explained as the power of Brahman by which the Absolute appears as the phenomenal world, sometimes as a cosmic illusion and sometimes as subjective illusion, in which case it is equivalent to *avidyā* (nescience). *Mâyā* in the view of some is indefinable. The word "*māyā*" has originally meant simply the phenomenal world of difference, the world of name and form; and the meaning of illusion has been later on added to it by the Advaitins. Whatever may be the cause of the distinctions in reality, the relationship between the different degrees of reality becomes difficult to explain. Indeed, there can be no relation. The difficulty is inevitable to any system of thought which maintains a distinction between appearance and reality. In extreme mysticism, since all metaphysical questions are avoided by saying that the intellect is incapable of answering them, and that in the mystic experience all such questions are dissolved, the question does not arise. In such an experience there is neither appearance nor reality.

But even if the law of rebirth is accepted it does not deliver the goods. The problem of explaining the differences in the deserts of man in this life or the differences in his propensities is only postponed, since it is said that the process of birth and rebirth is beginningless, and that the present life of the individual is the result of countless past births. Only if there is a beginning in the life of the soul, and only if we say that its future state is the result of its past deeds [where freedom of choice is granted in spite of the fact that the present state of man is determined by the influences of his past *karmas*; *i.e.*, even when a

large part of man's choice is determined beforehand by the impressions (*vāsanas* or *samskāras*) which result from its previous choices] we can significantly account for the differences in the present state of men. Furthermore, as Albert Schweitzer has pointed out,[5] when the soul passes on, for instance, into the body of an animal, in which case there is an absence of free choice, how can it attain to a higher life? For it is asserted that all souls ultimately attain salvation and that unless the soul is in the body of man it cannot attain *moksha*. Even gods have to be reborn as men to attain liberation. The upholders of the doctrine may reply to this saying that the result of past *karmas* are not homogeneous and that there amy be some good actions in the past life of an individual which will bear fruit after the fruits of the evil actions have been exhausted. But where is the guarantee that the fruits of good actions are sufficiently capable of insuring a human life for the soul? The laws of *karma* and rebirth have not been worked out so far as to account for the various difficulties. Besides, the law of rebirth ignores the obvious influences of heredity and environment in the life of the individual.

The law of *Karma* is a law of cause and effect in the moral sphere. But the nature of the effect is highly ambiguous, at least in the form in which the law is traditionally presented. The law of *karma* may be invoked for two purposes. It might have been contrived to explain the present state of the individual, which is most probably the case; or it might have been postulated to lay moral responsibility on the individual for his actions. If the second is the purpose, then the law defeats its own purpose. For unless man frees himself from the fetters of *karma* there is no liberation for him. The concept of *mokṣha* also involves freedom from births and deaths. That is, unless there is really no responsibility binding on the individual there is no liberation; so much so that speaking of ethical action within the realm of *karma* would be non-sense, for then ethical action would be a hindrance to liberation.

The law of *karma*, which is a law of moral causes and their physical, metaphysical or psychological effects, comes into conflict with the apparent physical law of causes and effects, and if individual freedom of choice is granted it comes into conflict with it too. Let us suppose that in an imaginary instance an individual X is about to kill another individual by name Y. If the law of *karma* be accepted the death of Y must be a result of the past deeds of Y, whereas apparently the cause is the murder of Y by X. If freedom of choice in X is granted then

[5] Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and Its Development*, London, Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1936, pp. 52–53.

he may choose either to kill Y or not to kill him or only to cut his legs instead. In any case, as long as X has not decided to act in any particular manner the death or otherwise of Y would be undetermined. But the law of *karma* states that the result is already determined. So, we see that as long as X's actions determine the future state of Y and as long as he is free to choose between alternative courses of action, his actions become incompatible with the law of *karma*. The incompatibility of the freedom of the individual with the law of *karma* has not been realised in the past because the law has not been worked out in such a detail, especially when it simultaneously affects more than one person.

The law of *karma* comes into conflict with the physical law of cause and effect and with individual freedom of choice because the nature of both *karma* and freedom has not been properly understood. The incompatibility has arisen because *karma* is supposed to be responsible also for natural evils like disease and earthquake. And freedom is not really freedom when it is freedom of choice, but only when it is freedom from the bondage of *karma*. Then freedom becomes the negation of *karma* and its conditioning influences on the individual. *Karma* can be maintained in only one sense, *viz*., that every activity of man, including mental and physical activity, has some conditioning effect on him. Every *karma* or activity, if it is performed within the limits of the ego, conditions the individual and compels him to repeat actions of its own nature. The law of *karma* is viewed in a similar sense in the Advaita Vedanta school. The concepts *vāsana* and *samskāra*, indeed, suggest this sense. Thus stated, the law of *karma* does not assert anything more than that every one of man's actions is liable to become a habit and that the habit, when it becomes fixated in him, comes into conflict with the ever new demands of the environment and with the other habits in him, thus creating conflict, frustration and suffering in the individual and consequently in the society. And the individual, unless he frees himself totally from the conditioning effects of actions, becomes more and more conditioned. Many habits are necessary for human existence, but unless man becomes totally free from the conditioning influence of habits, many of them are capable of bringing him suffering. This view of *karma* becomes clearer when one conceives how any idea, when it is strongly suggested to and fixated in the individual, is capable of acting on its accord and coming into conflict with the rest of the mental life of the individual. Indeed, man should be conceived as comprising of not a single self, but a plurality of selves, integrated under two or more predominant selves which come into conflict with one another, creating frustration and suffering. Only thus can we explain the infinite number of

conflicts and dilemmas happening in the life of man. In relatively highly integrated individuals the multitude of separate selves may be integrated under a single self. But unless there is a total absence of every sense of opposition between the self and the not-self or between one self and another an individual cannot be said to be completely integrated. In such an opposition we find the origins of conscience and the consciousness of sin and evil.

The concept of *moksha* has in later times been defined as freedom from *samsāra* or the cycle of births and deaths. Here *moksha* means nothing else than immortality of the soul. In ethical action also, it has been supposed that the immortality of the soul is a necessary postulate of moral action, for if man were not immortal the ethical values in his actions would sometimes remain unrealised. But immortality can be conceived in two different ways. On the one hand, it may mean the indefinite existence of the individual ego without a beginning and end; on the other hand, it may mean the cessation of the ego which creates the ceaseless births and deaths or becoming. It is in the second sense that the concept can be validly maintained. It is the fictitious ego that craves for permanency, that thinks that it is a permanent substance with a repertoire of experiences, and that imagines a future life for itself after the death of the body and a past life before the birth of it, for it cannot conceive how it has suddenly come into being and how it will cease to exist, though it does cease to exist and come into being at innumerable moments in the waking life of the individual. This state of affairs we can clearly perceive when we involve ourselves intensely in some emotional experience and come out of it and assert ourselves (or be conscious of ourselves) later on. The life of the ego is a contradiction. We somehow feel that our existence is negated when the ego is annihilated. We try to be ourselves all the time and that trying itself is becoming something other than ourselves. For any mystic ethic, which Hindu ethic is, immortality is the experience of eternity or timelessness which is always in the present, and the craving for permanency in us arises because our ego creates for itself a past with its experiences and memories and a fictitious future with its accompanying hopes and desires which crave for satisfaction, and identifies itself with them. Immortality is the negation of death and of time which the ego creates from moment to moment. When we are free from the bonds of our ego we are immortal. Immortality is in the eternal present (where we are not conscious of ourselves, for if we were then there would again be a past, a future and a present) where there are no distinctions of past, present and future. When we are immortal, time does not exist for us. Both the above meanings of immortality are inextricably interwoven in traditional Hinduism, and a discerning student must always separate the essential meaning from the unessential.

A CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF ETHICS

DR. HERBERT JAI SINGH

THE aim of this paper is to point up fundamental issues that distinguish Christian ethics from all other ethics. For our discussion we lift out two topics that lie at the heart of this distinction: (1) the capacity of man to achieve the good and (2) the criterion and norm of Christian ethics.

1. THE POSSIBILITY OF THE GOOD

The fundamental question of ethics is indissolubly related to the theological question, with regard to the nature of man, whether or not man is capable of achieving the good. Christian anthropology divides man into two basic categories: (*a*) the natural man and (*b*) the man as redeemed in Christ Jesus.

(*a*) *The Natural Man.*—The picturesque expression of the natural man is described with reference to the myth of the Fall of Man in the story of Adam's disobedience to the command of God (Gen. 3: 1–24). In the Old Testament we find that man was created in the *image of God*. This distinguished him from the rest of creation in the sense that he was capable of communion with God, that he had dignity above other created beings, and was given dominion over all. He possessed reason and freedom. In the New Testament in many passages (*e.g.*, Eph. 4: 24; Rom. 5: 12–21) we find that through disobedience this original image of God in man is lost; and the Christian message is that the image which was lost in Adam is restored in Jesus Christ.

The doctrine of the *imago* and its defacement does not, however, find a clear statement either in the Old or the New Testament. It was first developed in any noticeable form by Irenaeus. Irenaeus contended that at the Fall, man lost only the similitude, that is the capacity to have communion with God. He did not lose his *imago*, which is made up of reason and free will. Natural man, accordingly, still continued to possess rationality and freedom. Augustine taught that the first man was given "a special divine assistance (*adjutorium*) to enable him to attain fellowship, the original righteousness (*justicia originalis*) in which he enjoyed full communion with God." This was lost at the fall, that is the *adjutorium*. The Scholastics further developed this "two-storey" view of human nature, that is, through sin man had lost his gift of fellowship with God, but he still retained his human nature, *humanum*.

This interpretation of the Fall, the doctrine of *imago-similitudo* was vehemently attacked by the Reformers. Luther attacked the fragmentary interpretation of the doctrine, that is, its dualistic interpretation of human nature. For Luther man is a unity. What man lost at the Fall was not just a part of him, the rest remaining unimpaired, but his total nature, as a unity, was defaced, deformed, denatured. The total man is a fallen creature and not just a part of him. He had, however, to make room for that in man, which distinguishes him from the animals, his *humanum*. True, the image of God in man is defaced, nonetheless, there remains a relic, "a blunted and....dead relic" of the *imago* which gives superiority to man over animals. Calvin took a similar approach: "But now, although some obscure lineaments of that image are found remaining in us, yet they are so vitiated and maimed that they may truly be said to be destroyed. For besides the deformity which everywhere appears unsightly, this evil is added, that no part is free from the infection of sin" (quoted by Cairns: *The Image of God in Man*, p. 132). Both Luther and Calvin attack the dualistic conception of the *imago*, yet both find it difficult to explain the *humanum*, the rational aspect of man.

Barth and Brunner, following in the tradition of the Reformers, have rejected the classical interpretation of the doctrine of the *imago*. According to Barth, the doctrine has erred in dividing man into two, and saying that one of these has been lost and the other retained. As a unity man has lost the image *in toto*, even the *humanum* has become a *profanum*, and what significant difference does it make any way, in man's confrontation with God, that man is different from animals, that "man is not cat". Emil Brunner is not willing to go that far, that the *humanum* is merely *profanum* or a trifle. The *humanum*, as indeed the rest of the image is "perverted by sin, but in the perversion it still always reveals the traces of the image of God in the human structure, so that it is actually the formal 'human' element which betrays man's lost origin" (*Man in Revolt*, p. 514).

The basic truth contained in the doctrine of the Fall and its effect in the defacement of the *imago Dei* is that man is a sinner and in need of redemption. The Fall does not refer to a pre-history but expresses the human situation, here and now, and as it always is, apart from God. Man, as a natural being, is in revolt with God. Even his reason, the highest element in him, is used and directed to seek his own selfish interests. It is autonomous reason, which gives him the illusion that he can know and do good independent of God. His self understanding is vitiated with the false belief that he is good and is capable of achieving the good in his actions. He claims, that in some instances, he may do wrong but that he wills to do good. The truth of the Gospel, about

man is, that though here and there he might do what seems good, his will is self-centred. All his good works are vitiated because they issue out of a heart "that is bent upon itself" (*Luther*). Human good, be it ever so lofty, and seemingly pure, makes the ego, the self, as the centre. It is done either for its own gain, for its own glory, or for its own dignity. All this has serious ethical implications: The noblest ethical systems of man are devised to seek his own good. Because the doer is a fallen creature, a sinful being, that which flows from him is corrupted at its very source, the will and heart of man. "It is not good works which makes a good man, but a good man who makes good works." (Luther quoted by Brunner: *The Mediator*, p. 611). The Gospel says, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:10*ff*). "In the presence of the holy God all he has falls away from him: 'If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" (Ps. cxxx. 3). The basis of this judgment however, is no other than that which is the result of the examination of natural morality and ethics, namely, that in it man seeks himself, that he expects the good as the result of his own efforts, that he is sure that his life is secure and justified. This is the root of that which the Bible calls 'sin'" (Brunner: *The Divine Imperative*, p. 70).

(*b*) *The New Being in Christ.*—Natural man, therefore, is unable to achieve the good. This fact, the Christian Gospel, maintains, is revealed to the eyes of faith, only and nowhere else, at the cross of Jesus Christ, where God's self-giving love is revealed and where God wins the heart of man, and gives him a new spirit, a new birth and man becomes a new creation. "If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; and old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (II Cor. 5:17). It is from the perspective of the Cross that man realizes that he cannot achieve the good (for it was a perverted human goodness that crucified the Son of God on the religious charge of "blasphemy"). At the Cross the pretension of all human goodness is most clearly revealed. At the Cross also human perspective is altered, and man realizes that the source of good is only God. There is only one who is good, even God. The man reconciled to God knows that the good he is able to do is the work of the Holy Spirit that worketh in him. It is the fruit of the Spirit of God. He himself was nothing whereof to glory. Henceforth all "boasting is excluded". For he knows that good deeds are the gifts of God to him and the proper response to good deeds is not boasting but "gratitude". Man cannot claim the merit for his good deeds because he does them in the power of God and the glory goes to God. Man, henceforth, learns to depend on God and not on his own good deeds. As the Augsburg Confessions (A.D. 1530) says: "It is also taught that such faith must bring good fruits and should do good works which are commanded by God, and that for God's

sake, but not in order to trust that through these works we earn justification before God. For forgiveness of sins and justification is had through faith, as is testified by Christ's own voice. "Well, it is the same with you; when you have done all you are bidden, say, we are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty."

Now is man truly free to do good. The natural man, the man independent of God sought a righteousness of his own. He strove to achieve the good by positing an "ought" before him. Hitherto ethics was a constraint, a duty, with all its frenzied compulsion. Freedom comes when man is born in Christ. Now man can relax in obedient surrender to God. "I live and yet not I but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). It is he who does the good through me. Man prior to faith in Christ acted for the sake of duty, for some kind of "oughtness", now he is actuated by love which is not of his own making but a gift of God. Man prior to faith was, in a way, free but free only to do "good works" which were vitiated by self-interest. Just as un-freedom is the result of dependence on the efforts of the self, so also freedom and peace are a result of dependence on God. "Free will is not the independence of the creature but is rather his self-realization in perfect dependence" (R. C. Moberly quoted in Dewar and Hudson: *Christian Morals*, p. 31).

2. The Criterion of the Good

We have said that the natural man, acting apart from God, is incapable of realizing the truly good, and that the redeemed man, having been freed from the self, is able to achieve the good because God, who alone is the source of good, works in him.

The redeemed man, however, is not an automaton. He too asks the questions: "What is the right action in this particular situation?" "What criterion may I apply to assure that my action is right?"

Christian ethics rejects both answers of legalism on the one hand and antinomianism of the other. It is an ethic that transcends both these extreme positions. According to legalism, the criterion of right conduct consists in either the submission to a code of law or to some ultimate principle such as happiness, usefulness, or moderation. Legalism has, therefore, the attraction of simplicity (as in casuistry). The right is distinguished from the wrong by the application of the relevant law in the code or is deduced by the process of subsumption, that is as a case under the accepted ethical principle. Legalism is contrary to Christian ethics because it tends to set up a code or a principle as the final norm of action, which is a form of idolatry. It leads to pride and the good that is achieved is vitiated. Legalism tends to be dogmatic, and rigid and thus it hinders the genuine, spontaneous

creativity in the ethical sphere. It indeed gives direction in the line of the accepted good, but on account of its rigid prohibitive character it often excites action contrary to it. "Yet, if it had not been for the law, I should not have known sin. I should not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, 'You shall not covet.'" (Rom. 7: 7.)

When St. Paul criticised Jewish legalism and told the Christians that "for freedom Christ has set us free" (Gal. 5: 1), many of his readers, either innocently, or deliberately, drew the conclusion, that having been freed from the slavery of the Law, Christians were now free to do as they liked, that the distinctions of right and wrong had been abrogated and "that everything is lawful" (1 Cor. 6: 12) for them. They had been under the bondage of the Law so thoroughly, that for them, the only ethical alternative seemed to be either law or antinomianism. Paul, however, warned them by clearly stating his ethical position, as equally opposed to antinomianism. "For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh but through love be servants of one another" (Gal. 5: 12). And again, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any" (I. Cor. 6: 12).

According to our understanding of the Christian ethos, the norm of the good is not a law, nor a principle but the will of God. What God wills is good and God wills love because God himself is love. The criterion of love transcends both legalism as well as antinomianism. Love is not legalistic because it does not prescribe specific action for every situation. It changes its contents and its tactics according to the needs of the situation. "Love does what is ready at hand." (Luther) "Love alone can transform itself according to the concrete demands of every individual and social situation without losing its eternity and dignity and unconditional validity. Love can adapt itself to every phase of a changing world" (Tillich: *The Protestant Era*, p. 155). Love has an unchanging character of itself but it expresses itself differently in each situation according to the needs of love. It is, therefore, able to maintain its validity as a norm of ethics through the changing conditions of every age. "Love never ends; as for prophecy, it will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away" (1 Cor. 13: 8). But love "abides" as the summation of all virtues, through all the fluctuations of historical circumstance. This is not true of codes and principles. There are no natural law principles that do not eventually succumb to the relativities of contingent existence.

Christian love is best expressed by the Greek word *Agape* as over against *eros*. *Agape* is the heedless, sacrificial, suffering

love, that loves irrespective of the merits of the object of love. It is manifested and understood most clearly at the foot of the Cross, where "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son," and that for our sake "while we were yet sinners" (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8). The heedlessness of the ethical criterion of love is the same as the foolishness of the Cross. In contrast to *agape*, *eros* refers to the type of love in which mutuality is the decisive consideration. It "seeketh its own" advantage. Thus it is calculating and possessive love. *Agape* is heedless of its own advantage. It is always giving.

Criticism has been made that such love is only ideal, that it has no relation to actual concrete experience. It is true, according to the Christian faith that natural man, that is man prior to faith, cannot love except with the *eros* love for the natural man is subject to the pride of self. When man, however, is grasped by God, he is enabled to love by *agape* love. The *agape* ideal of love reaches a closer approximation in personal relationships even more than in impersonal relationships. In wider social relationships, *agape* finds expression in the currency of justice. "The more closely an institution approaches the personal sphere, the smaller the number of human beings it embraces, and the less things in it predominate over persons, the greater is the scope it gives to love" (Brunner: *Justice and Social Order*, p. 129). Justice seeks to give each man his due and nothing more. Love is not against justice because love knows that every one must get at least his due. But love goes byeond justice because it does not deal with persons purely on the basis of their due. Love is not opposed to law that ensures justice in any given society and age. It remains, however, a permanent critic of all forms of temporal justice. *Agape* saves societies and cultures from being frozen by outmoded forms of justice. It presents in ever fresh ways the claims that have been neglected or suppressed on account of the prejudices of any age or group and insists on a continual re-examination of the rights and privileges of individuals and groups.

In day-to-day personal relationships love acts on its own intuitions in terms of the needs of the situation. An individual is able to listen to the whisperings of the Spirit in the decision of each moment. This is not possible in the ordering of groups, nations and other impersonal orders. Here love requires laws and institutions for impersonal orders do not operate in terms of love. Christian love is willing to use any laws and institutions that fulfil the mission of love in any society. It cannot, however, be completely identified with any laws or institutions of any age. With the forward onflow of history, and the appearing of new situations and circumstances, it needs to change laws and institutions to meet the needs of a changed society. Love, therefore,

remains "*dominant* and free in any partnership it enters" (Ramsey: *Basic Christian Ethics*, p. 343) with laws and institutions. "Love demands laws and institutions, but love is always able to break through them in a new kairos and to create new laws and new systems of ethics" (Tillich: *The Protestant Era*, p. 159).

For interpreting the principle of love for action in actual concrete social situations, many Protestants have suggested the concept of "middle axioms". "Middle Axioms" are principles that stand somewhere midway between the general principle of Christian love on the one hand and the actual decision to action in any individual or social situation. They "define the directions in which, in a particular state of society, Christian faith must express itself. They are not binding for all time, but are provisional definitions of the type of behaviour required of Christians at a given period and in given circumstances" (Visser's Hooft and Oldham: *The Church and Its Function in Society*, p. 210). These certainly give direction for action to individuals and groups for action in particular situations but love remains free from the bondage of "middle axioms" or any axioms for that matter, to act according to the will of God, whenever love chooses to assert its freedom.

This is what we have been trying to say in this paper: According to the insights of the Christian faith, the natural man, acting on his own, independent of God, is unable to achieve any good that is not tainted by self-interest.

Only when man is grasped by God, and his perspective is altered from himself to God, is he able to achieve the good, God working through him.

The criterion of Christian ethics is *agape*. *Agape* may express itself in individual and social action, in terms of some law, institution, or "middle axiom", but it remains dominant and free, ready to change its tactics according to the bidding of the sovereign and free God, for the needs of each new situation.

REVIEW SECTION

PHILOSOPHY IN INDIA*

By C. T. K. Chari

Introduction.—India, after gaining her political independence, has been in the throes of a new birth. The change has been reflected in all the phases of her life. Philosophy has not been left untouched by the national *Sturm und Drang*. The greatest single influence on Indian philosophic thought, during this period, has been, of course, S. Radhakrishnan who is one of the very few to have achieved the improbable feat of being at home in two different climates: the East and the West. His success is all the more startling, because he is no easy and accommodating philosopher; he has never wavered in his loyalty to the great spiritual traditions of India. And he is no Admirable Crichton looking round him only for disciples. Under his subtle and stimulating influence, philosophy in India is branching out in many directions.

1. *Study of Sources and Historical Settings.*—Vedic and historical studies have gained a new impetus. The three volumes of Geldner's[1] German translation of the *Ṛg-Veda*, with critical notes, take into account almost all the exegetical work done previously and may be regarded as the most up-to-date and authoritative study of this source. Indian scholars have found in the historical study of their scripture a rewarding and fascinating task. After the original discovery of fragments of the *Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa*, a veritable storehouse of myth and ritual, Raghuvira succeeded in unearthing some new manuscripts. The International Academy of Culture at Nagpur has issued the formidable translation, running to 1252 sections, by Raghuvira[2] and Lokesh Chandra. K. N. Dandekar, C. Kunhan Raja and A. C. Bose have made important contributions to Vedic studies. The Vaidika Saṁśodhana Maṇḍala of Poona has brought out the fourth and fifth volumes of its critical edition of the *Ṛg-Veda Saṁhita* with the commentary of Sāyana. On the European continent, Louis Renou's comprehensive studies of Vedic sources and philology have been followed by Faddegon's excellent work on the *Sāma Veda* and J. Gonda's appraisal of aspects of early Viṣṇuism.

J. Sinha[3] has followed up his early studies of Indian realism and psychology with a history. The fourth and fifth volumes of Dasgupta's[4]

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history, dealing with the pluralism of Madhva, the controversy between pluralists and monists, the Caitanya movement and Southern Śaivism are works of scrupulous scholarship. Much philosophical interest in India today centres round translations and expositions (Radhakrishnan *et al.*,[5] *Cultural Heritage*[6]) not only of the *Upanishads* and the *Gita* but of non-dualistic (*Advaitic*), panentheistic and theistic (*Viśiṣṭādvaitic* and *Dvaitic*) texts designed to bring into relief the central issues. An admirable source book in Indian philosophy, falling, however, outside the period surveyed here, has been edited by Radhakrishnan[7] and Charles A. Moore.

Visvabharati University in West Bengal, founded by the poet Tagore, has been encouraging some very competent Sino-Indian and Indo-Iranian studies. E. Conze[8] and his collaborators have brought out a dependable collection of Buddhist texts from the vast Pali, Sanscrit, Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese sources. Radhakrishnan's[9] translation of the *Dhammapada* and his sustained interest in Buddhistic ethics have given the fillip to much re-thinking in contemporary Indian philosophy. A problem that has exercised influential Indian thinkers is whether Buddhism and the orthodox Vedanta philosophy are basically compatible. A symposium hinging on the problem was held at the session of the Indian Philosophical Congress which met in Ceylon in 1954.

2. *Reaffirmations and Re-orientations.*—The immense zeal for historical studies displayed by Indian scholars does not mean at all that Indian philosophy has no contemporary existence and life of its own. The Indian Philosophical Congress has maintained an active interest in current problems, thanks to the unremitting efforts of its Secretary, N. A. Nikam, of Mysore University. Existentialism and logical positivism have figured prominently in two symposia. Radhakrishnan's comparative method aims at a mellow synthesis of the old and the new. His whole approach is rooted in the recognition of the universality of spirit and the reality of integral experience (*anubhava*). His Beatty Memorial Lectures,[10] delivered at McGill University, are a model of the method. Intuition ranks higher than intellect; but Radhakrishnan insists that there is no antithesis between the two.

Aurobindo's philosophy, positing in effect Cosmic Beatitude (*Ānanda*) and Cosmic Energy (*Śakti*) as its ultimate principles, has won the undivided loyalty of some contemparary Indian thinkers. Whether this philosophy stems from all the orthodox sources has become a large and engrossing problem. "Has Aurobindo refuted *Māyāvāda*?" was the burden of a symposium read on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Indian Philosophical Congress held in Calcutta in 1950. G. R. Malkani, the distinguished editor of the

Indian *Philosophical Quarterly*, while he fervently believes in a self-revealing and self-luminous Truth at a non-empirical level, has tended to view Aurobindo, on the whole, as a major disaster to classical *Advaitic* traditions; and he has made no secret of his views. Indra Sen, J. N. Chubb and Haridas Chaudhury believe in a mystical intuition no less unreservedly than Malkani; but they see in Aurobindo's philosophy a new and fertile synthesis. S. K. Maitra,[11] formerly of Benares University, has represented Aurobindo's 'spiritual humanism' as the meeting of East and West.

P. T. Raju's 'Critico-Integral Humanism,' which is inspired largely by Radhakrishnan, is a generous and judicious synthesis of various aspects of Idealism, Eastern and Western. Raju[12] seeks to reconcile intellect and intuition, the rational and the supra-rational, the human and the divine, in Indian philosophy. D. M. Datta[13] has deprecated the rivalry of 'systems' and pleaded for that catholicity of thought which springs from the recognition that all philosophy is for life and action, both outward and inward. T. M. P. Mahadevan[14, 15] is endeavouring to 'rediscover' man in the context of a non-dualistic philosophy; he has been teaching that time is but the threshold of the timeless. T. R. V. Murti,[16] who has been exploring the central message of Buddhism according to the Mādhyamika tradition, rejects the nihilistic and pragmatic interpretations of Buddha's 'Silence' and maintains that the difference between the Buddhistic and the Vedantic 'Transcendence' is chiefly one of emphasis. S. C. Chatterjee[17] of Calcutta has more realistic interests in outlining the essentials of Hindu philosophy. Ras Vihary Das, who recoiled from the excesses of Absolutism, turned to modern existentialism without, however, falling for the extreme irrationalism of some of that persuasion. He is no mere *que-sais-je* sceptic but one who believes that philosophy, the "life of reflection," is an "autonomous spiritual activity". The convergence of the influences of Śaṅkara, Kant, Hegel and Green can be seen in the epistemology of A. C. Mukherjee who regards thought in its universality as the precondition of the categories. C. T. K. Chari[18, 20] has urged that the preoccupation with German and Anglo-American Idealism has dwarfed the perspectives in comparative philosophy. Distinguishing mystical intuition from other forms of intuition, he has argued that very suggestive parallels to the great spiritual traditions of India can be found not only in the classical Russian philosophies of Solovyov, Lossky and S. L. Frank, but in the Kierkegaardian teaching about *Indesluttedthed*, translated, not perhaps very happily, into the English *Inwardness* and the German *Innerlichkeit*. A little apart from these professional philosophers stands J. Krishnamurti[21] with his pursuit of a "choiceless awareness," an "alert passivity",

Rich materials for comparative studies of Indian and Western philosophies and of Indian and other Oriental philosophies can be found in the second volume of the history edited by Radhakrishnan[5] and his friends, the philosophic essays edited by Radhakrishnan[22] and presented in honour of A. R. Wadia, the pioneering journal *Philosophy East and West* edited by Charles A. Moore of the University of Hawaii, the two Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volumes edited by Mahadevan[23] and published by the Indian Philosophical Congress, and the sumptuous, if occasionally perplexing, volume about Radhakrishnan's philosophy edited by P. A. Schilpp.[24]

3. *Logic and Epistemology.*—Daniel Ingalls[25] has offered some very interesting data for a study of *Navya-Nyāya* logic along modern lines. He has suggested, for instance, that the repudiation of double negation by some *Navya-Nyāya* logicians approximates to Brouwer's intuitionistic logic. C. T. K. Chari[19] has traced parallels between Brouwer's logic, which replaces the classical $\sim\sim a \supset a$ by $\sim a \supset (a \supset b)$, and some Indian systems, also between multi-valued logics and mystical dialectic. He has discussed the problem of Gödel's 'undecidability' in relation to effectively calculable and recursive functions and their equivalents (Turing's 'computability,' Church's 'λ-definability,' Post's, 'normal systems'). Kalidas Bhattacharya[26] distinguishes the 'conjunctive' and the 'disjunctive' unities from the 'higher dialectical' unity gathering in itself A and the negating of non-A. Pravas Jivan Chaudhury has conducted some interesting epistemological enquiries in foreign as well as Indian journals. Suppose the subject S has a knowledge K_1 of object O_1, how can K_1 be *doubted* and its *verification* demanded? Chaudhury deals with the problem of 'hierarchy' and submits that the negating subject S^{999} leaves a "pure awareness". A transcendental method is required to find out the presuppositions of our ordinary consciousness.

4. *Philosophy of Science.*—Philosophy of science, with all its technical virtuosities, has not been cultivated very much at most Indian universities. C. T. K. Chari,[27, 28] however, has examined questions centering round relativity and time, quantum physics, neuro-physiological hypotheses about a "brain-mind liaison" and the alleged "revival" of "buried memories" by the deceptive hypnotic technique. P. J. Chaudhury[29] has been interested in problems of methodology, induction and probability, the commonsense and the scientific approaches to space and time, 'form' and 'content' in physical knowledge. Chaudhury and Chari, who participated in a symposium on the relation of philosophy to psychology conducted by the Indian Philosophical Congress in 1953, are agreed that the 'parapsychological phenomena' (telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition), which are denied or ignored

by a majority of Western philosophers, have strategic implications for any restatement of Indian spiritualism (Chari[30]). The Indian philosopher cannot, of course, afford to be credulous; but the incredulity of his Western *confrères* is perhaps a serious obstacle to progress in this field. C. D. Broad, H. H. Price, C. J. Ducasse and N. O. Lossky have already lit beacons of warning in the West.

5. *Ethics, Sociology and Politics.*—The overwhelming ethical interests of contemporary Indian philosophers may be judged from two symposia arranged by the Indian Philosophical Congress: "Can there be Ethics without Metaphysics?" and "Naturalism and Values". Hiriyanna's[31] posthumous essays, the therapeutic ethics of Bhagavan Das and Swami Akhilananda of the Ramakrishna Centre at Boston, the numerous expositions of the *Gīta*, of Gandhi's *sarvodaya* (with its implications for Vinoba Bhave's *Bhoodan* movement: Kumarappa[32] and of Tagore's social philosophy (S. Sinha[33]) bear witness to the preoccupation with ethics rather than hedonics. A. R. Wadia[34] finds that a *māyā*-ridden world and the nostalgia of pilgrimage offer insufficient incentives to the pursuit of values and he has asked whether those like Radhakrishnan who 're-define' caste are not compromising on a crucial issue. But a survey by D. Mackenzie Brown[35] suggests that *dharma* has been pivotal to Hindu ethics and politics. Humayun Kabir, so prominently associated with the Indian Philosophical Congress, has discussed Islam, democracy and education in the pattern of a new India.

Materials for a study of Hindu morals along modern critical lines are available. J. Brough[36] has probed the early exogamic *gōtra* system of the Vedic period. Radhakamal Mukerjee has examined the 'dynamics of morals' from the standpoint of modern social psychology and *Wissenssoziologie*. Human relations and international obligations figured in a symposium in which UNESCO and the Indian Philosophical Congress participated. N. A. Nikam[37] said on the occasion: "The need of an international community is ethical.... A world-community is necessary for survival." Perhaps it is no exaggeration to say that a majority of Indian thinkers told that *homo politicus* cannot function save in a broadly conceived spiritual democracy.

6. *Aesthetics.*—K. C. Pandey, S. K. De and P. V. Kane have furnished ample materials for the study of Indian æsthetics in a historical perspective. Hiriyanna's[38] posthumous essays contain suggestive interpretations of æsthetic delight or *rasa*. P. J. Chaudhury,[39] with obvious ability, width of learning and thoroughness, shows that a counterpart of Bullough's 'psychical distance' can be found in the classical Indian art criticism. A. S. Narayana Pillai of the Travancore University has expounded the æsthetic *Gestalt* in Indian art; and S. K. Nandi

has compared Croce's *intuizione espressa* with Tagore's conception of art; P. S. Sastri has offered some penetrating criticisms of empathy or *Einfühlung* regarded as a basis of art. C. T. K. Chari has drawn attention to the intimate connection between mysticism and its poetry. He seeks the link between Leopardi's poetry of pessimism and mysticism in what the Russian philosopher, Arseniew, called the "thirst for true being" (*Žaždа podlinnago bytija*). He singles out for emphasis Leopardi's "e il naufragar m'è dolce in questo mare". Aurobindo's[40] philosophical poem requires attention in this context. The Indian counterpart of the German romanticist doctrine of the *schöne Seele* deserves closer study.

7. *Philosophy of Religious Symbolism.*—An impressive feature of contemporary Indian studies in this field is their width. Not only Hindu religion in all its manifestations (*Cultural Heritage*[6]) but Islam, Christianity and even Chinese and Tibetan religion are being studied. Mir Valiuddin has expounded Sūfīsm with a sure grasp of sources. The religion of Gandhi has been interpreted by D. M. Datta[41] (*cf.* Fischer[42]) as a pluralism and theism rather than as an unqualified non-dualism (*Advaitism*). The studies of religious symbols undertaken by foreign students like C. G. Jung, René Guenon,[43] G. H. Mees,[44] Jean Herbert,[45] have great suggestive value for Indian scholars.

8. *Western Appraisals.*—It is well known that Western opinions about Indian thought, during the past century or so, have ranged from sheer admiration to absolute contempt. India was an arresting paradox, a challenge and an opportunity to Voltaire, Goethe, Rolland and Tolstoy; a dream, an over-belief, a wish-fulfilment, to Schlegel, Schopenhauer, Emerson, Yeats and Keyserling; an obsolescent Asiatic phenomenon, a senescent culture, an object-lesson on the vanity of human wishes to Hegel, Gobineau and Spengler. The dust of controversy has not settled even now.

Zimmer,[46] in his survey of Indian thought, has argued that two contrasting cultural strains were fused in the religion and philosophy of India when they were yet in the crucible. Vedic thought was fundamentally joyous and life-affirming. Gradually the pessimism of non-Aryan thought wounded its way into the religo-philosophy of India without, however, quenching its flame. The idea of reincarnation, according to Zimmer (one remembers here the earlier studies of Bloomfield, Macdonell, Vallée-Poussin, Deussen, Pischel and Roth), had a non-Aryan birth: so too Jainism. Zimmer's thesis invites comparison with Schweitzer's well-known view that Indian thought oscillates precariously between life-affirmation and life-denial, between a Personal God and a neutral World-Ground, between ethics and mysticism.

The critics of Radhakrishnan have dwelt [in Schilpp (Ed.)[24]], on the slipperiness of the term 'intuition' in his writings, his evasion of the question whether a Personal God and an Absolute can keep house and his many compromises between tradition and reform. His admirers claim that he has set forth a truly universal religion. Bernard Phillips, with more balance, points out [in Schilpp (Ed.)[24]] that the naturalist critic of Indian spiritualism cannot, with justice, demand verification on *his own* terms. One must be willing to disengage oneself from the trivialities of sense-perception when one proposes to test spiritual truths. Charles Moore observes [in Schilpp (Ed.)[24]] that even when Radhakrishnan transcends ethics, it remains indispensable to the ethics-transcending stage. F. S. C. Northrop's thesis that the East is concerned with an æsthetic immediacy and the West with *a priori* postulation as well as *a posteriori* validation has been overdone. Radhakrishnan's tolerance must shame many critics out of any heavy-handed attempt at satire or cynicism. He has brought the fruits of a wide and open-eyed learning before the East and the West. We cannot look a considerable gift horse in the mouth.[1]

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THE CHRISTIAN ENCOUNTER WITH OTHER FAITHS

By Rev. H. B. Partin

The Christian Approach Series. published By the Edinburgh House Press, London, 1958–59. 64 pp. each. Paper cover. 2 *s.* 6 *d.* each.

The Christian Approach to the Buddhist. By George Appleton.

The Christian Approach to the Hindu. By Jack C. Winslow.

The Christian Approach to the Muslim. By G. E. Marrison.

The Christian Approach to the Jew. By H. L. Ellison.

The Christian Approach to the Communist, By Edward Rogers.

The Gospel and Renascent Hinduism. By P. D. Devanandan. IMC Research Pamphlet No. 8. SCM Press, London, 1959. 61 pp. Paper cover. 4 *s.*

Sandals at the Mosque. By Kenneth Cragg. SCM Press, London, 1959. 160 pp. 12 *s.* 6 *d.*

These seven small, readable books will give the student a good introduction to the Christian encounter with men of other religions.

The Rev. George Appleton, author of *The Christian Approach to the Buddhist*, has had a rich and rewarding fellowship with Buddhists, both in Burma where he served as a missionary and in the West. One cannot read this little book without seeing something of his capacity for inter-religious fellowship, his appreciation for the Buddha, and his earnest desire to communicate the good news of Jesus Christ to Buddhists.

I would question, however, whether he has given us an adequate theological critique of Buddhism. Christianity is put alongside Buddhism as another religion and, at the same time, above it as *the* religion which will meet the Buddhist's deepest longings and needs. I miss here a sense of the judgment of Jesus Christ on all religion, including "Christianity" (as an empirical religion) and "Buddhism". A proper sense of this would cause us to see the relationship not as a relationship between religions or within religion but as a relationship between the Christian gospel and all "religion" as human responses, partly right and partly wrong, to the divine self-revelation. How can the gospel cut through our religion, whether Christian or Buddhist, to address us effectively as men? We are in the curious situation that our religions both help and hinder our confrontation by the gospel. Mr. Appleton has stressed the ways in which it helps, but he does not seem to have an eye for the ways in which it hinders.

Father Winslow has given us, in *The Christian Approach to Hinduism*, a good, brief introduction to traditional Hinduism. As a "Christian approach" it is, I believe, rather less adequate.

The author makes three main points:

1. Hindus and Christians are "almost allies" in the defence of "spiritual values" against the materialists.

2. While Hindu and Christian conceptions of God are different, a bridge can be built across the gulf separating them by a certain kind of Christian mysticism on the one side and the great *bhakti* saints on the other.

3. The Christian religion must be indigenized in India. This would involve a restatement of Christian theology in the light of Hindu thought and tradition and the expression of Christian faith and life through Indian rather than Western forms.

Father Winslow would deny that he is a syncretist. He writes: "For the Christian, unless he is prepared to deny the very heart of his faith, must make a claim for the Founder of his religion which no Hindu can tolerate. He must maintain and assert his faith that Jesus Christ is the unique revelation of God to our world...." (p. 41).

He seems to be saying that the relationship between a Hindu and a Christian is a religious relationship—a relationship within religion. This would mean that a Christian is more closely related to a religious man than to a non-religious man. Is the basis of a Christian's relationship with other men in religion, or is it in their common humanity? Father Winslow seems also to be saying that there is a higher religion within religion and that this higher religion is being sought by Christian mystics and *bhakti* devotees. He seems, as Mr. Appleton, not to have taken account of the judgment of the gospel on *all* religion.

The Rev. G. E. Marrison's *The Christian Approach to the Muslim* is an excellent introduction to Islam in less than sixty pages. He has the enviable ability to pack a great deal of information into his pages without sacrificing readability. However, we do not really get a "Christian approach to the Muslim", but some remarks on the history and difficulties of Muslim-Christian relationships and a few general observations.

The Rev. H. L. Ellison's *The Christian Approach to the Jew* has a rightful place in the series. A Christian too readily assumes that he knows all he needs to know about Judaism because the Old Testament is a part of the Christian Scriptures and because he is familiar with Jesus' strictures against the scribes and Pharisees. One of the values of Mr. Ellison's little book is that it helps to destroy this illusion.

The author has attempted to deal with too many subjects (who is a Jew, Jewish history, Rabbinic Judaism, the modern Jew and Jesus, and "the Jew and I"). The result is that there is only a very general consideration of the Christian approach.

The greatest value of this little book, and the main reason why it should be widely read by students, is that it reminds one of the shameful

history of Christian-Jewish relationships and invites him to examine any anti-Semitic attitudes he may have. This is important in view of the fact that a new generation is arising which has little or no memory of the attempted annihilation of the Jews by the Nazis.

Also included in the series is *The Christian Approach to the Communist* by Edward Rogers. The author writes: "It may at first sight seem strange to put Communism in a series intended to deal with the world's religions" (p. 8). After all, it is materialistic in its philosophy and anti-religious in its propaganda. But, as Mr. Rogers points out, "Communist preaching and propaganda have a strongly religious flavour about them" (p. 9). He points also to the fact that the political organization of the communist state is very like that of the Church, to the role of party members as a "lay priesthood of experts", to the "prophetic" role (in the senses both of prediction and judgment) of Karl Marx, and to the consciousness of being a "chosen people". He does not give much attention to the question of why there are such similarities. One might profitably give some attention to whether and in what ways communism is, as some have held, a "Christian heresy". It is certainly true that communism was possible and is understandable only against the background of the Judaeo-Christian faith. How and why does it function in many ways as a religion, as it demonstrably does, while denying religion?

The author makes a useful and clarifying distinction between (1) communism as "a theory about the best possible way for human beings to live together", (2) communism as "the very precise body of teaching about history, philosophy, economics, and religion associated with the names of Marx and Lenin, and (3) communism as "the name given to the social and political organization and activities of the USSR (and, with differences, of China and Yugoslavia). "The three manifestations of communism are interwoven, but they are not identical. It follows, therefore, that before the Christian determines his approach to any of them he should be clear in his own mind which one he is approaching" (p. 13).

In chapters on Marxism, Leninism, and Stalinism, the author shows the movement towards a re-interpretation of communist doctrine and, perhaps more importantly, the movement away from doctrine towards a dictatorial party and state capitalism.

In a brief concluding chapter on "The Christian Approach" the author calls attention again to the three-fold nature of communism (general theory, particular theory, and contemporary practice) and indicates how he thinks each aspect should be approached.

We are given very little by way of a theological critique of communism. Most of the author's judgments and his suggestions as to approach would be unobjectionable to, say, a secularized but humanitarian political scientist. Is there, in addition, a specifically Christian word to be said?

The "Christian Approach Series" gives us only an introduction to the other religions and to the question of Christian attitude towards them. International Missionary Council Research Pamphlet, *The*

Gospel and Renascent Hinduism, by Dr. P. D. Devanandan, carries one much farther in the attempt to understand what is happening today within a religion and to clarify the Christian concern. The author is Director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society at Bangalore in South India. The pamphlet is the result of careful research and study and of personal involvement in the problems of Indian society.

In a brief chapter on "The Frontier of Renascent Hindusim", Dr. Devanandan concentrates on the crucial problems which Hindus are having to face. By "frontier" he means the points at which Hinduism is experiencing life-forces expressed in terms of religious beliefs, humanitarian values, science and technology, cultural patterns, and the like which are impinging on Hindus from without. "A great deal of what we call the Hindu renascence is due to the Hindu awakening to the border-situation, the impact of forces from without and the consequent renewal within" (p. 8). It is at this "frontier" that the vital encounter of religions is taking place. (Let Christians not forget that they are facing a frontier situation not wholly unlike that of Hinduism.)

Dr. Devanandan believes that three forces in particular are forcing a restatement of Hindu religious beliefs and practices. These are (1) "the general acceptance of the scientific, secular outlook which gives precedence to the material things of life as contributing to the common good, and the welfare of man in particular"; (2) the "priority.... given to the repatterning of human relations in society with a view to ensuring the worth of individual men and women, and to safeguarding the total good of the community"; and (3) the "widespread interest in the need for achieving a true sense of human solidarity so that the basic unity of the world of nations may not be endangered by war" (p. 8). He gives some indications of the restatement which is actually taking place.

Extremely interesting and illuminating is his chapter on "The Hindu Approach to Christianity". We may fail to realize that there is such a thing, for it is new. He deals, in particular, with the Hindu apprehensions about any Christian communalism and with the opposition to "conversion". One sentence from this chapter must be quoted: "It is amazing that while the Christian evangelist talks about the need for proclaiming the faith dissociated from the cultural forms which are part of the Western heritage, Hindu religious leaders advocate the dissemination of just these cultural forms as separated from their Christian foundations" (p. 36).

In a final chapter on "The Christian Concern in Renascent Hindusism", Dr. Devanandan calls for a new encounter with resurgent Hinduism. This can come, he believes, only when Christians discover a more adequate understanding of evangelism as involving many dimensions. We Christians are facing today the difficulty and the challenge of witnessing to our faith and of communicating the gospel message in a way that is meaningful, relevant, and challenging to our Hindu contemporaries at all levels of present-day culture. "The real issue centres on the question whether or not the Gospel we preach has the power to liberate and renew man in society" (p. 42).

In final paragraphs the author deals with the questions of *diakonia* (service) and collaboration with men of other faiths. Both are questions which must be faced in the context of the Christian-Hindu encounter. At present Christians are uncertain about the relation of *diakonia* (service) to *kerygma* (the essential Christian message). Is *diakonia* integral or instrumental to the proclamation of the *kerygma*, or does it exist in its own right as a necessary and essential expression of the Church's life? Must we not do further thinking about the collaboration with men of other faiths in which India is facing in its nation-building? "This calls for a measure of identification with those who do not agree with us, and, in fact, repudiate the fundamental presuppositions and ultimate objectives of Christian faith" (p. 59). This does not mean that Christians must identify themselves with every program of service. As Dr. Devanandan writes: "The question today is not 'Who is my neighbour?' It is 'What is good for my neighbour?' ". He adds:

> So we co-operate with all those who are profoundly concerned about the pressing needs of modern man in the unsettled state of affairs, brought on by the prevailing desire that all people everywhere be given every opportunity to self-development in true community. But we look beyond the revolution for the ushering in of the new age in which the children of men shall have been so completely transformed that they live in the conscious knowledge of verily being the children of God! This new age we believe is already in our midst,... (p. 61).

This pamphlet is to be highly recommended to anyone who wants seriously to understand the renascence of Hinduism and to think about the responsibilities to which it calls Christians.

Those who know Dr. Cragg's earlier book, *The Call of the Minaret* (1956), will expect a great deal from his latest, *Sandals at the Mosque*. They will not be disappointed. His deep knowledge and appreciation of Islam, his awareness of the crisis of Islam in the world today, and his creative thinking about the Christian responsibility towards Islam make him one to be heard.

This little book is the first in the "Christian Presence Series". We may look forward to titles on "The Christian Presence" amid Buddhism and Hinduism by other authors.

In the first part, "In Quest of Islam", Dr. Cragg would have us place our "sandals" alongside those of the Muslim at the door of the mosque and enter with the Muslim in quest of what Islam is and means. Happily, we have Dr. Cragg as our guide. He interprets the sights and sounds for us and verily introduces us to the faith, devotion, and dilemmas of the Muslim.

In the second part, "Conditions of Inter-Religion", we are reminded that the worshipper puts on his sandals upon leaving the mosque and walks into a world very like that in which Christians walk. We are reminded also that the Muslim shares human nature with Christians and that his needs, yearnings, wistfulness, and fears are basically the same. Religions can no longer remain isolated from one another. They have to face the same general set of facts and relate themselves to much the same problems. Dr. Cragg writes:

> Islam and Christianity deal fundamentally with the same things and to a significant extent deal with them in the same way. The distinctiveness that lies beyond the commonness is serious and inclusive, and reaches back inevitably to qualify what is shared. The Christian presence in witness has to do critically and gloriously with this distinctiveness. But only on the ground-fact of things in common (p. 74).

He reminds us that all truly Christian relationships begin and continue in humility because of Christ's self-humiliation for our redemption. This humility must also involve honesty in which we speak out of the deepest and fullest meanings of Christ.

In the third part, "Present with the Peace of God", Dr. Cragg concentrates on a single, but central, area of Christian meaning and its communication to Islam. This is the meaning of divine sovereignty, which is also at the centre of Islam. He writes in the Foreword:

> One crucial area of this inter-involvement is examined....where the vast corollaries of the Islamic rejection of idols and the Islamic affirmation of God's unity are seen to be, not only in themselves deeply Christian things, but emphatically to involve the whole Christian meaning of redemptive love. For it is only in these terms that the last idols are dethroned and men liberated into the love of God (p. 20).

He has shown that to take the divine sovereignty with full seriousness and to follow all its implications is to be led to Christian meanings.

Perhaps the most significant thing about Dr. Cragg's book is that he is addressing two audiences, Muslim and Christian, at the same time. That makes it unique among the books reviewed here, and tremendously important.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Culture and Art of India. By Radhakamal Mukerjee. (George Allen & Unwin Ltd.) Pp. 434. Price *sh.* 50.

This is a scholarly study of the growth and development of Indian culture through the many centuries of Indian history, an almost continuous stretch of five millennia. The author contends that "the dominant note of this culture is metaphysical and æsthetic rather than religious and theological"; and that this accounts for the flexibility and catholicity of Indian culture and the large measure of success it obtained in assimilating alien and backward races and peoples both within the country and abroad. Dr. Mukerjee maintains that the approach to Indian history must, therefore, be integrative and cultural rather than merely political.

With this intention this volume has been written, surveying the entire period of Indian history by "concentrating on fundamental 'ideas-in-action', myths and values". These are found in the fourfold goals of life (*catur varga*): *Dharma*, or absolute righteousness, *Artha* or vocation, *Kama* or fulfilment of desires, and *Moksha* or release, all in a governing metaphysical frame of reference. The story actually begins with an account of the Indus Valley culture of Mohenjodaro and Harappa unearthed by recent archeology. It was with this culture that the Aryan invaders made peaceful terms after many sanguinary battles. Dr. Mukerjee holds that Siva worship, the cult of the Mother Goddess, the notion of the sacredness of water and the use of certain charms were among many other ideas and practices which were taken over into the Vedic culture of the Aryans. The story of Aryan colonisation of India, according to our author, is found in the two famous epics, Mahabharata and Ramayana, and it resulted in the caste-organisation of society, now composed of Aryan and non-Aryan people, and in the evolution of a "new philosophy of life" which came to be known henceforth as Hinduism.

The history of Indian culture is traced from then on in terms of four reformations. The first was a revolt against ritualism and it resulted in the rise of Jainism and Buddhism, both of which tended towards a secularism and a humanism, which, according to Dr. Mukerjee, laid in question the metaphysics of the Upanishadic Vedanta. In the second reformation, however, Buddhism became transformed into a world religion and spread over into South and East Asia, building a sense of Asian unity. A whole chapter is devoted to this account of the spread of Buddhism in Asia and the consequent waves of Indian colonisation. A quotation from this chapter may be of interest to the readers of this review. "Human history records no other movement to compare with the silent fusion of races, customs and manners and the peaceful spread of civilization across the centuries among the less advanced peoples of Central and South-Eastern Asia. For the first time in the history of the world, the expansion of a people and their

culture was identified with neither exploitation nor violence but with the elevation of backward races to a higher level of religion, culture and morals. This is the fundamental keynote of Indian colonial activity: the diffusion of scriptures, icon and art motifs, and not expropriation nor economic victimisation."

The third reformation was due to the rise of Sankara Vedanta in the ninth century of our era. In the light of the Vedanta metaphysics the *Sakti* cults were restated, especially in Bengal and paved the way for the revivial of the *bhakti* cults, leading thus to the fourth reformation. Now the centre shifts to South India and Vaishnavism, and the central figure is that of Ramanuja, though the spread of *bhakit* cults in North India was due to the influence of Ramananda. "In the North, however," Dr. Mukerji holds, "*Bhakti* was not an expression of national defeatism or escapism, but a great democratic upsurge, an awakening of dynamic religious life; not only was it able to meet effectively the religious and social challenge of Islam, but it also strengthened the dissenting creed of Sufism within the bosom of Islam by modifying its uncompromising monotheism and racialism."

After devoting a chapter to the discussion of the eclecticism and humanism of the Mughal period, our author deals with the modern resurgence of Hinduism beginning with the period of the rise of the Marathas. Its influence continued during the period of the British Raj and resulted in "the liberalism and the idealism of the Indo-British renaissance". Dr. Mukerjee, however, holds to the view that essential Hindu culture has not been radically changed by contemporary reforms. In fact, he says: "Even in the midst of bitter struggles with foreign peoples establishing themselves on Indian soil, the genius of Indian culture was maintained; its spirit of assimilation, comprehension and synthesis was able to meet the challenge of diversity and conflict." And for the future, Dr. Mukerjee concludes: "All cultures will be judged in this hazardous atomic age according to their role in the establishment of justice, peace and order in a global society. In this scale of judgement the values of Indian civilization, properly presented and interpreted against the background of the past, can help to provide the basis of universal peace, genuine internationalism and a world civilization befitting the human race."

One wonders whether this claim has to some extent rendered difficult an objective, historical survey. It is apparent in every chapter that Dr. Mukerjee has been considerably influenced by this didactic purpose so that the emphasis has been placed more on the interpretation than on history. Another impression which one gets on reading a study such as this is whether Hindu intellectuals quite see the difference between metaphysics and religion, for, in spite of the disclaimer with which Dr. Mukerjee begins his interpretation, it seems obvious here that the "central thread of history" is in fact "religious and theological". This raises another question. Is Indian culture the same as Hindu culture? Surely these many centuries of "assimilation and synthesis" have led to some amount of de-Hinduising of what is now Indian culture.

Radhakamal Mukerjee is a scholar of international repute who has spent a lifetime of laborious research in the field of Indian history

and culture. This most recent book of his brings together the fruit of devoted labour and close study of the voluminous source material. Written in a pleasing, narrative style which scrupulously avoids all pedantry and distraction of footnotes and references, the treatment is nevertheless scholarly and authoritative. A classified bibliography and a time-chart, giving principal events, epochs and movements, add to the value of the book. By the way of illustration, quotations from literary works, hymns and inscriptions have been included, as well as examples of the principal motifs and symbols of Indian art, especially sculpture. The illustrations are introduced by a valuable description of each plate. This book will make very profitable reading to any one who is interested in the history of Indian religious life and thought and in the extent of the early influence of Hindu culture in South-East Asian countries which is still evident in their contemporary cultures.

P. D. DEVANANDAN.

Aspects of Indian Religious Thought. By Prof. Shashi Bhusan Dasgupta. (Published by A. Mukherjee & Co., Calcutta). 1957. Pp. iii + 247. Price Rs. 5·00.

This book consists of a number of essays, some of them originally written as articles in books or magazines, others presented first as lectures and later published from time to time in the *Bulletin of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture*, Calcutta. The subjects discussed in these essays include the following: Sacrifice, *Mantra*, Mother-worship, the conception of Purushottama, the Divine Body, Tantric *Yoga*, "The Indian Attitude towards Nature", and three short studies in Bengali Vaishnavism.

Prof. Dasgupta writes in the preface that this is "a popular book ....for those who have a desire to know something about Indian thought." This study aims "to bring to people interested in Indian thought and culture some of the aspects of Indian religious thought which have sustained this country through the ages". In dealing with all of the various topics, the author says that he "works under a deep conviction....regarding the *special quality* of the national mind of India".

Prof. Dasgupta justifies including the article, "The Indian Attitude towards Nature", though it "does not obviously fall under the caption 'Indian Religious Thought' ". He is quite right to do so, for here we gain an insight into a very basic Hindu attitude. He concludes his survey of the Vedic poets thus:

> ....at least some of the Vedic poets deeply realised.... a homogeneity between their own individual life-process and the rest of the cosmic order....(springing) from a deep realisation of oneness with the whole universe....a strong feeling....that our human individuality is just a part of an all-absorbing entity, of which the whole universe is a manifestation in time and space.

This attitude of the Vedic poets also comes to light in the Aranyakas and Upanishads, and has many expressions in the Epics. In the

Ramayana, Sita is said to be the daughter of Mother Earth and all of the creatures of nature were her friends. This lack of a distinct line of demarcation between the animate and inanimate is also typical of the classical poets, not as an artistic device, but as a matter of conviction. In addition to their belief in the oneness of the cosmos, the poets "generally believed that nature works for the satisfaction of God". The article is concluded with several quotations from the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore, illustrating his "nature-mysticism" and his belief "in the unity of cosmic life".

The chapter on "The Indian Conception of Sacrifice" traces the evolution of this conception from Vedic times. The author points out several philosophical implications of the view that "Nature herself is constantly performing a sacrifice". First, the various parts of nature are co-ordinated, and lower principles merge into a higher principle. Second, the sacrifice carried on by nature is for the general welfare of beings. Third, the workings of nature are really "offerings to a supreme luminous Truth". Thus "sacrifice means a divine bliss and also a return process of gradual descent from the highest to the lowest, transforming....the lowest".

This attitude towards nature is also closely connected with the worship of the Divine Mother, which is discussed in a long chapter on "Evolution of Mother Worship in India". Although worship of goddesses seems particularly strong in the non-Aryan traditions, the Vedas speak of Prithvi, Mother Earth. Both the Vedic and non-Vedic goddesses are closely associated with the earth and its outstanding features and powers. With the development of the conception of Śakti in the Puranic Age, the consort of each major deity was conceived as giving expression to his powers in the life of man and nature. The strongest emphasis on Śakti as the Great Mother occurs in the Śākta cult.

It was especially in the Śākta cult of Bengal, but also in certain sects of Vaishnavism and Buddhism, that Tantric *Yoga* or *sādhana* developed. The Tantric practices are based on two principles. The first is the belief that

> the ultimate truth is not an abstract principle transcending the universe, but is immanent in it, and that the human body is not merely a thing in the universe but is an epitome of the universe —a microcosm in relation to the macrocosm. There is therefore nothing in the universe which is not there in the body of man.

The second principle is that "the body....is not only the abode of truth, but is also the best medium for realising the truth". This principle underlies the forms of *hathayoga* where the union of the two cosmic principles, *nivṛtti* and *pravṛtti* (Śiva and Śakti) is to be realised within the body of the *yogin* or *sādhaka* and it is also the basis of the *sahajīya yoga*, where through sexual union the initiates realise the cosmic equilibrium of the union of the Divine male and female principles.

The *mantra*, the power-laden word or formula, is an important element in many types of Hindu worship. The rational defence of

the Vedic *mantras* against Buddhist scepticism led first to the Karma Mimamsaka theory of *śabda* (word-sound), and this conception was later fused with Upanishadic thought to form the notion of the Śabda-Brahman, "the first cosmic vibration of the absolutely inactive and unqualified supreme Being". It is this thought which lies behind much later use of the *mantra*, which found "its most diversified play in the Tantras", where Śiva stands for Aśabda Brahman and Śakti for Śabda Brahman. "To a real *sādhaka*, all sounds are *mantras*, as they, in various degrees exemplify the infinite activities of the original Śakti, the great Mother."

A theology similar to that of Śākta may also be seen in the Caitanya sect of Vaishnavism. Caitanya himself is regarded as the incarnation of God in which Krishna and Rādha are combined. There was already a tradition going back to the *Gita* of "a synthesis between Vedantic monism and devotional dualism". The members of this sect do not, like some of the great Tamil and Mahratti Vaishnava poets, identify themselves with the *gopis*, but desire only to be humble attendants at the divine sports. Members of the sect believe that through Caitanya is revealed "*the charm and beauty of the self-love of God* conceived in an amorous pattern in human analogy". Rādha pleases her Divine partner Krishna and also pleases the devotees by causing "their blissful devotional experience". Caitanya was also one of the first to introduce a new type of worship, the congregational chanting of the "name" of God.

In this chapter on "The Indian Conception of the Divine Body", the author first deals briefly with the Vaishnava conception of "a concrete body of spiritual substance possessed by the Divinity" and then goes on to discuss a second conception, developed by the Siddha sect of Śaivites, of "a perfectly transubstantiated spiritual body possessed by the divinized perfect man". Vaishnavas believe that the Lord eternally enjoys the divine sport in a *real* divine body and that this body is identical with His essence. Bengali Vaishnavas also hold the second conception, more characteristic of Śaivites. Aurobindo's thought has been much influenced by this Siddha effort to spiritualize the gross physical being. Aurobindo maintained that "man can attain to perfect manhood by fulfilling God in life, and not by a total rejection of life. His life begins from animal vitality, but achieves its fulfilment in a divine existence". Aurobindo believed that "what is needed is a full spiritual transformation, a permanent ascent from the lower to the higher consciousness, and a permanent descent from the higher into the lower nature....by surcharging the lower principles by the light and power descending from the supermind".

The idea of Puruṣottama " as the all-embracing perfect Being " was another source of inspiration to Aurobindo. This idea is first clearly developed in the *Gita*, though there are some anticipations of it in the Purusha hymn of the Rig Veda and in the *Svetāśvatara Upanishad*. "The idea of Puruṣottama or the supreme Being evolved as the best proposition to synthesis the opposite trends" in the Upanishads —the personal and impersonal conceptions of the supreme Being. The highest being, *uttamaḥ purushaḥ* is different from both the *kshara purushaḥ* (mutable substance) and *akshara purushaḥ* (immutable substance or pure intelligence) (*Gita*, XV, 18).

The idea of the Purushottama represents an all-absorbing wholeness, comprising within it all the diametrically opposite poles....in some of the Purānas and in later Vaiṣnava philosophy (particularly of Bengal), the Puruṣottama has been defined as the supreme divine Person who has the inherent power of absorbing all sorts of contradictions. ..These principles of matter and mind, body and spirit....are nothing but the two aspects in which the divine energy works.

The appearance, the world of mutability, represents as much of the supreme Being as does the unqualified formless Reality. It is no mistake to describe the Brahman or the great One as formless, unqualified, inactive, and incomprehensible; but we must not forget that this is merely one aspect of viewing the Truth, but not the only aspect. He who expands also contracts; to be viewed as infinitely contracted is one pole of the Truth, the other pole being an infinite expansion in manifestation. Indeed, there is Māyā, a mysterious and an inscrutable power, working between the two; there may be logical difficulty in associating this Māyā with the *akṣara* Brahman of the Vedantins, but there is no difficulty in associating it with the supreme Being, in association with whom Māyā discards her unreal and illusory nature and becomes *yoga-māyā*, the mysterious power and will of the supreme Being.

Perhaps the special contribution of this book is to express in more systematic thought many elements which are of fundamental importance in the devotional life and practice of millions of Hindus, but which are either ignored or left unexplained in philosophical expositions of Hinduism. Prof. Dasgupta has called our attention to some of the basic features of the theistic Hinduism, particularly as this is represented by the Vaishnava and Śākta devotion of Bengal.

This exploration of the Bengali religious mind as providing a key to the "*special quality* of the national mind of India" is quite illuminating. A fuller treatment of the subject might take up more closely the special characteristics of the devotional and intellectual life of other parts of India. However, a certain clarity is gained by the narrower focus, and there is the further advantage that in Bengal many barely conscious assumptions of popular Hinduism have been articulated in systematic thought. This is not only because of the long literary tradition in Bengali, but also because Hinduism in Bengal contains a more thorough fusion of Aryan and non-Aryan elements than is to be found in many other parts of India.

Prof. Dasgupta gives us a somewhat different impression of Hindu religious thought than the one which has often been presented as the epitome of Hindu philosophy. The basic apprehension is indeed one of *Advaita*, of a fundamental unity in the cosmos, but it is very far from Śankara's *kevalādvaita*. This unity does not imply the negation of all diversity and of all the concrete expressions of life but includes them within itself, and "Itself" is a less adequate statement of the basis of this unity than the dynamic union of "Himself" and "Herself". Prof. Dasgupta rightly emphasizes that this kind of monism is not only characteristic of popular Hinduism, but is integral to the basic conceptions of Hindu thought.

J. B. CARMAN.

COLLOQUIUM ON THE HINDU AND CHRISTIAN VIEWS OF MAN

National Christian Council Lodge, Nagpur, 10–13 October, 1960

PROGRAMME

Monday, 10th October:

Morning ..	Arrival at N.C.C. Lodge.
2–30 to 3–00 P.M. ..	Opening Session: The Purpose and Programme of the Meeting.
3–00 to 4–15 P.M. ..	*The Srivaishnavite View of Man.* Prof. M. Yamunacharya.
5–30 to 7–00 P.M. ..	*The Vaishnava View of Life.* Prof. S. B. Dasgupta.

Tuesday, 11th October:

9–00 to 10–15 A.M. ..	*The Vedantic View of Man.* Prof. T. M. P. Mahadevan (paper submitted).
10–30 A.M. to 12–15 P.M.	*The Saivite View of Man.* Prof. V. A. Devasenapathi (paper submitted).
2–30 to 3–30 P.M. ..	*Man in Society, a Hindu View.* Swami Vishvananda.
3–30 to 4–30 P.M. ..	*Man in Society, a Christian View.* Sri. M. M. Thomas.
5–30 to 6–15 P.M. ..	*The Biblical View of Man.* Principal J. R. Chandran.
6–15 to 7–00 P.M. ..	*Man from the Standpoint of Christian Thought.* Dr. A. E. Inbanathan.

Wednesday, 12th October:

9–00 to 10–15 A.M. ..	*Man as an Ethical Individual, a Hindu View.* Sri J. S. R. L. Narayana Moorty.
10–30 A.M. to 12–15 P.M.	*Man as an Ethical Individual, a Christian View.* Dr. H. Jai Singh.
2–30 to 3–30 P.M. ..	*The Origin and Destiny of Man, a Hindu View.* Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan.
3–30 to 4–30 P.M. ..	*The Origin and Destiny of Man, a Christian View.* Dr. P. D. Devanandan.
5–30 to 7–00 P.M. ..	*The Concept of Personality, a Hindu View.* Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao.

Thursday, 13th October:

9–00 to 10–15 A.M. ..	*The Concept of Personality, a Christian View.* Principal D. G. Moses (omitted).
10–30 A.M. to 12–15 P.M.	*Issues arising in the comparison of Hindu and Christian Views of Man.* General Discussion.
2–30 to 4–30 P.M. ..	*Report on the Studies on "The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men".* The Rev. H. B. Partin.
5–30 to 7–00 P.M. ..	Closing Report of the Committee on Findings.

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THE NAGPUR COLLOQUIUM AT WORK

By Rev. J. B. Carman

A Colloquium on the Hindu and Christian Views of Man was held in Nagpur from October 10–13, 1960. This marked the first time that our Institute has brought together a group of Christians and Hindus. There were seven Hindu scholars present, most of them noted authorities in particular fields of Hindu thought. There were about a dozen Christian participants, including a number of theological professors. The meetings were held at the headquarters of the National Christian Council and the participants lived for the four days in the NCC Lodge.

A very satisfactory solution was found to the problem of eating together. Vegetarian meals were served throughout the Conference, since the Hindu participants were strict vegetarians. By joining together in these vegetarian meals, the Christians did not hide the fact that they ordinarily did eat meat, but they showed that they were prepared to give up eating meat during these days for the sake of fellowship at table. On their part, the Hindus were also accommodating. It happened that all seven of them were Brahmins, who according to orthodox tradition may not eat any food which has been touched by members of a lower caste, yet they did not raise any objection to the fact that the food was being prepared by Christians and they expressed their appreciation of the housekeeper's efforts to cater to their wishes. Even the one Hindu who ate by himself, because this period was part of the preparation for a religious ceremony which he was to perform a few days later, joined us at table after he had finished his own meals. Our informal discussion around the dining table was an important part of the conference, and our eating together was a significant symbol of our accepting one another as friends.

At this meeting, Christians were the hosts, and the pattern of worship arranged was entirely Christian. Christian grace was offered before meals, and every morning and evening Christian worship was held, to which the Hindu participants were invited and which some of them attended.

Dr. Devanandan, the Director of the Institute, said in opening the Conference that "Indian Christianity has come of age". This was essentially a meeting between Indian Christians and Hindus. There were only four present from the "older Churches", and they took little part in the discussions. Of those, two were visitors from the World Council of Churches; the third was a missionary, principal of a theological college, with many years experience in India; and I was recording secretary. It is clear that from now on the Christian participants in such conversations as these will be principally Indian Christians, who are and want to be distinctly Indian, yet who are also going to keep their ties with the world-wide Christian Church. Those ecumenical

ties were reflected partly by the Westerners included in the circle of discussion, but even more by the fact that the Indian Christian thinkers did not hesitate to draw from classical and recent Christian thought in the West as from a heritage which is also now their own.

The Differences between the Hindu Views

The rather crowded schedule of these four days meeting included the reading and discussion of thirteen papers, many of them printed in the present issue of the Bulletin. There were two groups of papers. There were six background papers, four giving different Hindu points of view on the whole subject and two analysing the development of Christian doctrine of man in the Bible and subsequent Christian history. The remaining seven papers were on four sub-topics of the conception of man: "Man in Society", "Man as an Ethical Individual", "The Origin and Destiny of Man", and "The Concept of Personality".

What stood out to me as a Christian student of Hinduism was the wide difference in views among the Hindu scholars present, views which sometimes seemed quite contradictory and incompatible but which did not prevent those holding them from accepting one another as Hindus. There did not seem to be anything like this breadth of difference among the Christian participants. There were several reasons for this. In the first place, while the four Hindu background papers represented four different traditions within Hinduism, the two Christian papers were written by those from the same Christian tradition and did not so much stress the continuing existence of contrary interpretations of man in Christian theology, though they were certainly mentioned, especially in Dr. Inbanathan's paper. It would have been possible to have Christian background papers more comparable to those written by the Hindu scholars. These might have been included one on the Roman Catholic doctrine of man, the conservative Protestant view, the view of the Eastern Christian theologians, and one or more modern views, both liberal and neo-reformation. A second and more important reason, moreover, was that the Hindu participants themselves came from a number of important traditions within Hinduism, whereas all or almost all of the Christian participants had learned and personally appropriated much the same kind of modern "ecumenical" orthodox thinking. It may also be that the demands of Christian witness in India have brought Christians closer together in these theological view and made them less inclined to argue about different interpretations than is still done in the West. Yet it would have been possible to include Christian participants representing more of the whole range of Christian thought. It is another question whether it would have been wise to do so, for Christians of different persuasions rarely argue as amicably as did the representatives of the Hindu traditions at this Conference. The third reason is undoubtedly that the range of diversity within Hinduism is greater than the diversity within Christianity, but this difference between the relative comprehensiveness of the two religions was undoubtedly somewhat over-emphasised for the first two reasons just given.

Whatever the reasons may have been, the Hindu scholars who participated in this Colloquium represented a number of the major classical

traditions and also some of the modern reinterpretations. In the West and to a certain extent in India as well, non-Hindus have gained the impression that the absolute monism of Sankara is the expression of philosophical Hinduism (a misunderstanding which has vitiated a number of recent Western Christian interpretation of Hinduism). If anyone came to this meeting with that impression, it should have been thoroughly dispelled, for here we met a number of interpreters of the Vedanta whose traditions differed radically from that of Sankara's *kevala advaita*. Indeed it was my impression that what is usually known as the *Advaita* tradition was in a minority on certain crucial issues. Whatever the relative strength of the absolute *Advaita* and theistic Vedanta positions today, there is no doubt that they were both well represented at the Colloquium and that the differences between them were made sharp and clear.

Prof. Mahadevan wrote that " the supreme truth is that there is no creation and no plurality ", and that it is therefore relevant to talk about man and creation and their relation to God only from the empirical point of view. On the other hand, in four of the papers developing different theistic views, it was stressed that even if Being is ultimately one, the material world, individual souls and God are distinct realities.

This difference also came out in the discussion of man's predicament. Prof. Sankaranarayanan maintained that sin is the consequence of man's ignorance or forgetting the true Infinite nature of the Self brought about by his finitude, or more exactly, by his finitising consciousness. On the other hand, Prof. Yamunacharya stated that evil begins with the delusion that the soul is independent of God and is its own sole proprietor. " The chief sin is stealing to oneself what belongs properly to God." Prof. Nagaraja Rao defined sinful acts as those in which the individual asserts his autonomy thus forgetting or denying his utter dependence on God, and maintained that it is such sinful acts along with violations of the general rules of morality and the neglect of the duties of one's station in life which prevent the soul from attaining salvation.

Both absolutist and theistic Advaitins agreed that a saving knowledge (*jñāna*) was required for salvation, but again this knowledge was quite differently conceived. Two of the papers referred to the parable of the lost prince. Prof. Sankaranarayanan quoted a passage from Thoreau giving Sankara's version, which stresses that the saving knowledge which the youth gains is of *his own nature*, who he himself is, that he is really a prince. Prof. Yamunacharya quoted from Ramanuja's version of the same story, in which the decisive point is the youth's discovery of *who his father is*, that is the king of the realm. Prof. Nagaraja Rao referred to the Christian parable of the prodigal son to bring out a further point about the theistic Hindu view of the way to salvation. He said that man must discover that he is in rebellion against God and must unconditionally surrender. Whereas for the *kevala advaita*, *karma yoga* and *bhakti yoga* are only preparatory steps to *jñāna*, the papers presenting theistic position stressed the prominence of *bhakti* (devotion) and *prāpatti* or *saraṇāgati* (surrender as a suppliant for God's grace). Prof. Yamunacharya said that the knowledge of God obtained by the study of scriptures must ripen into the love of God.

Moksha or salvation is also quite differently interpreted. Prof. Sankaranarayanan characterised it as the stage of unitive consciousness in which there is sheer joy (*ānanda*), a stage even beyond that of the mystic union of two distinct beings. The theistic interpreters, on the other hand, stressed the eternal metaphysical distinction between the soul and God. Prof. Dasgupta said that because man is eternally a spiritual atom whereas God is eternally all-pervasive, man cannot merge completely in God but remains a distinct spiritual entity, an attendant in the Lord's abode and an eternal witness to the joys of the Divine sports. Prof. Yamunacharya defined *moksha* as follows: "True liberation for the individual lies in obtaining the privilege to serve God for ever and anon and to enjoy the bliss that comes out of service rendered to God and all that belongs to him." "Man finds the consummation and crown of life in the enjoyment of bliss service of God. He reaches the presence of God, becomes like unto Him and finally becomes one with Him."

These differences which were brought out in the papers were further amplified in the discussion, especially in some sharp rejoinders of Prof. Nagaraja Rao whenever he thought that Prof. Sankaranarayanan was presenting Sankara's view as the one normative position of the Vedanta. The discussion further brought out various other differences which to some extent cut across the difference between absolutist and theistic *advaita*. There seemed to be a clear difference in temper between the South Indian and North Indian approaches to some of the questions before us. The South Indian approach emphasised careful definition, distinction between different views, and a clear choice for one well-defined position. This was true not only of the representatives of the two classical traditions mentioned, but also of the views of Mr. Narayana Moorty who presented a striking reinterpretation of the traditional *advaita*. Perhaps there are other facets of North Indian Hindu thought equally diverse and conflicting as those in the South represented, but both Prof. Dasgupta and Prof. Atreya seemed to hold traditions which try to make it possible to reconcile the opposite positions. Prof. Atreya said that in North India there is no conflict between advaitism and theism. Prof. Dasgupta spoke of a conception of Deity (*Purushottama*) which transcends and includes both absolutist and theistic views of the Ultimate Being.

Certain differences also seemed apparent between classical Hindu positions and the emphases of more modern interpretations; sometimes the differences seemed to be within the same mind as well as between minds. Mr. Narayana Moorty's paper was the most strikingly "modern" in that, though considering himself a Hindu, he rejected the traditional interpretations of *karma* and transmigration and proposed a radically new interpretation of Hindu ethics. His views were somewhat reminiscent of idealistic Buddhism, not only in his negative definition of Being, but also in his identification of metaphysics with ethics and his forthright rejection of all that was contrary to these metaphysical ethics. Prof. Sankaranarayanan objected strongly to this denial of the ethical validity of the traditional duties and the metaphysical reality of their *karmic* effects within the realm of empirical reality. "There are free thinkers in every religion, but I cannot accept that one who does not accept the Vedas, *Punarjanma*, *Karma*, or the *Varṇāśramadharma* can claim to be a Hindu!" In an earlier discussion

Prof. Sankaranarayanan had tried to clear up what he called a "misunderstanding of the ethics of *Advaita*". "The rules of cricket are true as long as the game is going on. From the point of view of ultimate *Advaita*, all of us are one in essence, but as long as this is not realized, we are in the position of the players in a cricket match. You cannot import into practical life a theoretical knowledge of *Advaita*. The ordinary man is in a moral predicament." (That is, he must act responsibly in a world of conflicting wills.) This refusal to link a particular ethical action with the unitive nature of Ultimate Being is certainly in accord with the classical position of Sankara. It was surprising, however, that Prof. Sankaranarayanan did not receive any support from his Hindu colleagues in the Colloquium for this "cricket match" theory of morality. Indeed, Prof. Atreya, also a proponent of the *Advaita* rejected the assumption behind this theory: the distinction between the transcendental (*pāramārthika*) and empirical (*vyavahārika*). "I do not think that there are two levels. In the empirical, the Absolute is there. We are all rooted in the Absolute."

There was complete agreement among the Hindu participants about the central place of *dharma* ("ethics") in the life of man and nature and in the primary significance of the concept of *dharma* in the ordinary Hindu's understanding of his religion. The difference was as to the ultimate metaphysical significance of *dharma* and as to its relation to the ultimate non-dual Reality. In general, there was a stress on life in this world and an ascription of permanent metaphysical significance to *dharma*, which underlies this worldly life. In spite of his "cricket match" understanding of morality, Prof. Sankaranarayanan spent the last portion of his paper urging the relevance of the Advaitin understanding of man for the problems of society. "The only remedy for conflicts in this world is the cultivation of *Advaitabhāva*." It is true, as Prof. Nagaraja Rao pointed out, that Sankara had taught that the basis of immorality lies in the illusion of plurality, which produces competitiveness between man and man. Yet I believe that there is an important difference in emphasis in the modern interpretation of this teaching. Sankara wanted to indicate what was the *necessary* state of affairs in the empirical world of men and nature, for which there is no *remedy for social conflicts*, as well as the way to salvation for the individual involved in society.

Both Advaitins and Theists wanted to give the ethical imperative of love of neighbour a metaphysical basis. The former would say, "Love thy neighbour, because thy neighbour is thyself". The latter would put it a little differently. As Prof. Dasgupta expressed it, "I am to love my neighbour and serve him through acts of charity not because I feel myself completely identified with him; but because I feel unity with him, both being sparks from the same light of truth". He went on to state a second ethical motive: "The ideal that God, our Lord, is pure and infinite love in His essence also inspires one to love and compassion even in social relations". This same thought was also expressed by other participants.

Even *moksha* was interpreted by some in terms of an ethical commonwealth. Swami Vishvananda stressed the Gandhian ideal of *Rāmrājya* the kingdom of God in this world in which *sarvodaya* (the welfare of all), would be realized. When questioned about the possibility of having

the kingdom of God on earth, he replied that while complete perfection may not be possible in society, we can approach the condition of the State in the time of Rama, when most human beings upheld *dharma*. Prof. Atreya then commented that while we can all become *jivanmuktas*, society cannot become permanently Divine. We are now in *Kaliyuga*, when evil predominates. There has been and there will again be an age in which the *sāttvic* or divine qualities in men prevail (*Satyuga*), but this will not be the final state, for it will be followed on by another fall, and so on in an endless cycle. For individuals, however, it is possible to get away from this cycle of ups and downs by achieving *moksha*.

Prof. Nagaraja Rao linked *dharma* and *moksha* in the following ways: "Man's perfect personality is achieved in his loving self-surrender to God. This enables him to effectively live his life achieving social good, *lokasaṁgraha*". Prof. Yamunacharya described "the highest end conceivable to man" as *kainkarya* "which means service of God (*Bhagavad kainkarya*), which fulfils itself in *Bhāgavata kainkarya* or the service of those who belong to God". The Vaishnava saints "were content to even remain on earth eternally if it meant living in God and for God....To realize the *paramapada* or *vaikuṇṭha* (the kingdom of God) on surface of the earth was their eternal dream". These contemporary theists were referring to a strong emphasis in the classical Vaishnava traditions on the link between *dharma* in this world, the Divine nature, and the nature of *moksha*. Nevertheless, here too a modern emphasis was detectable in the stress on the importance of the body as an instrument for achieving spiritual ends and an insistence on the high values of this worldly existence. Dr. Devasenapathi devoted his entire paper to this theistic emphasis. He admitted that there are two strands in the Saiva Siddhanta tradition regarding the value of being born into this world, and then went on to put deliberate emphasis on the positive strand. A closely related tendency in several papers and in the discussion was the emphasis on the importance of Creation. Particularly Prof. Dasgupta tried to interpret the traditional motive of *līlā* (Divine play or sport) as including the notion of Divine purpose. He frankly drew on the thought of Rabindranath Tagore in so doing, and this led to some discussion about the modern influence in Tagore's treatment of traditional Vaishnavism.

Differences between Christians and Hindus

Many meetings in the past between Christians and Hindus have tended to stress the common elements in their respective religions and the fundamental unity of all religions. These ideas were occasionally voiced during the Colloquium, but the general tendency was rather in the other direction: to bring out the differences between Christianity and Hinduism. This was especially true of the papers read by Christians, but this effort to clarify differences between the two religions was also evident among the Hindu participants. I must say that I wondered during the reading of Mr. Thomas's paper how the Hindu participants would react to a presentation of the Christian Doctrine of Man which seemed to stress every point of difference with Hinduism, especially with the *Advaita*.

It should not be thought that the difference explored were only those between Christianity and the *Kevaladvaita* of Sankara's school. Theistic Hinduism was well represented at this Conference, and the discussion brought out both striking similarities and fundamental differences between this position and that of the Christian faith. One of the most important differences was the contrast between the Hindu cyclical view of history in which the law of *karma* is operative and the Christian linear view of history in which the purpose of God is finally triumphant. Related to this difference were widely varying views on the nature of sin, the operation of Divine grace, and the nature of Divine incarnation. There was a less clear cut difference, but nonetheless a distinct change in emphasis, between the theistic Hindu definition of Man as a soul having a body, and the Christian understanding of Man as a body-soul unity, or even as a body animated by a soul. At one crucial point a number of Christian participants felt a greater difference between the Christian doctrine and the theistic Hindu position than between their own view and that of the *Advaita*. This was with regard to the doctrine of Creation, where the theistic Hindu conception of the co-eternality of the world and living souls with God seemed to them to threaten the Divine pre-eminence more than the Advaitin doctrine of *Maya*, which teaches that this co-eternality of the world is only an apparent reality, since in highest truth there is no Creation.

The Call to Understanding

For most of those present, this was the first experience of this kind of meeting between Christians and Hindus. Dr. Devanandan said at the beginning that this was an experiment, and later on participants were asked whether they thought the experiment should be repeated. There were a number of different suggestions as to what topic should be taken up at a following meeting and how it should be discussed. Prof. Dasgupta urged that a future Colloquium study "the meaningfulness of the elements of the two religions in contemporary life". Prof. Yamunacharya commented, "In this Colloquium we have had a study of dogmas and doctrines of the two particular faiths, but a better purpose for a future Colloquium would be to study the elements of true spirituality in both religions". There were others who felt that we needed to continue the process of clarifying differences in points of doctrine in order that we might better understand and appreciate one another. Prof. Atreya remarked:

> It is for the first time in my life that I have attended such a Seminar where thinkers of the two religions have come together and discussed issues so cordially. The need of the time is understanding. We are *different* individuals (in spite of my Advaitic Philosophy !). Therefore we need fellowship and mutual understanding. We should take only the liberties which we are prepared to give to others.

There seemed to be universal and enthusiastic agreement among both Hindus and Christians that we ought to continue having such meetings together, both those like the first one which would draw Hindu and

Christian scholars together from all parts of India, and meetings of Hindus and Christians living in the same city or region.

Prof. Sankaranarayanan so admirably caught the spirit of the Colloquium in his farewell words of appreciation that it is worthwhile to quote at length from them here:

> There is a good deal in trying to speak frankly without malice. Christianity is no longer a foreign religion for us, though it was when English Missionaries came and tried to convert a large number of our people. Now, however, we find that many people are becoming Christians, apparently from sincere conviction. Christianity has evidently come to stay. It has taken root, as Dr. Devanandan said in welcoming us, and has become a religion of the soil. Therefore it is up to us as Hindus to appreciate the point of view of Christians. Of course, merely because we appreciate some tenets of Christianity, we may not become Christians !..... If I want to understand the Christian religion, I must put away Hindu preconceptions. Likewise, I beg that you Christians would enter into the Hindu mind and try to see how the Hindu looks at the universe..... Try to remove all preconceived judgments about Hinduism, and you may understand these conceptions as we understand them.

We surely need to respond to Prof. Sankaranarayanan's appeal to us to try to understand Hinduism, whether or not such an effort on our part leads Hindus to a similar attempt to understand the very strange message of the Gospel.

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